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THE NEW REPUBLIC

June 24, 1978

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TRB

from Washington
June 24, 1978

SSTs

The war baby of yesterday is buying jogging shoes today. The economists can identify his passage through the American economy as clearly as the naturalists can identify the bulge of a pig going through a boa constrictor. In biology the process is called peristalsis; among demographers a group like the 1945-60 war baby crop is called a "cohort" (I don't know why). America's birthrate declined 15 years before the war; then it jumped extraordinarily for about 15 years; now this last 15 years it's down again—a slow decline to the present 0.8 percent.

An enterprising businessman with an eye on Significant Social Trends (SST) could adjust his sales pitch to the postwar bulge: first cribs and diapers; then pens and notebooks; now jogging shoes and new homes; and, pretty soon, 35mm cameras to catch the next generation. And so on . . . to hearing aids and wheelchairs and funeral homes. "The shape of the age distribution curve can be predicted with almost pinpoint accuracy for the next 85 years" [from 1945], says George Brown, secretary of The Conference Board, Inc., testifying before a special inquiry in Congress chaired by Representative Richard Bolling of Missouri.

The Bolling committee has been going in for Significant Trends as they affect the economy, and I've found it fascinating to sit there and forget about Mr. Brezhnev and Panama and catch dim glimpses of the social revolution. The social revolution is always going on, and it doesn't assay a headline in a carload, but sometimes afterwards you look back, and rub your eyes, and note that this is where it all began.

For example in America today there are suddenly smaller families, and fewer children, and more households, and more young wives working and more mothers working, and the arrival of the two-paycheck family, and a crying need for more day-care centers, and a smaller work force supporting more retired people, and a social security system that bends under the strain.

Or, if you want a different tack, there are three migrations going on all at once inside America—from the frost belt to the sunbelt, from metropolitan areas into towns and villages (sometimes pushing or pursuing factories); and from the central cities into suburbs (leaving elderly, pensioners and disadvantaged blacks behind them). These developments can all be traced in dull statistical tables gathered by demographers who write PhD theses about them. They show up problems sometimes that politicians sweep under the rug. Does the rug move? Never mind, it can be handled later in the 1980s (but the 1980s are only two years away).

Take Social Security. It was invented just as Americans decided on two-child families. It was supposed that the work force would support the retired workers by their payments in so-called income transfer payments. But the postwar baby boom will turn into a senior citizen boom in the 21st century. Or, to put it more precisely there is currently a ratio of six active workers to one retired citizen, while by the year 2030 the ratio will be only three to one. Long before that, in fact already, the working force is going to need other taxes to carry the load.

Distributions of social security, pensions and the like are called "transfer payments." Don't underestimate their size. It is the check from the government that keeps the old person going in a cheap tenement or an unemployed man off a breadline. Transfer payments amounted to 33.8 percent of *all* federal expenditures during 1976. (National defense was 32.4 percent.) The ratio is recently bigger: transfer payments were 39.8 percent in the last quarter of 1977.

America isn't going broke. It's just that the ceaseless American social revolution is always shifting things around. The standard of living is rising, the quality of life (if we knew how to measure it) is probably rising, too. Take education. Schooling is a commodity more and more widely distributed through the country. In 1940 only a quarter of the people in the US had graduated from high school. But 30 years later half the population were graduates, yes, and 10 percent were college graduates. Starting with the baby boom generation and thereafter 90 percent have finished high school, and 25 percent college.

That's a splendid record. Put the American worker up against the Russian worker and he can adapt himself better to technology and industry. Education is strongly related to levels of voting, wages, reading, participation in community affairs and democracy. It means that when politicians argue over radio on a problem like inflation, there are a lot of listeners who read newspapers and can form sophisticated judgments of their own. The school changeover since World War II is nothing less than an explosion.

One extraordinary thing is what's happening to women. You can't keep a young woman down on the farm after she's seen a paycheck. "Two-paycheck" families have increased sharply. Peter Morrison of the Rand Corporation told the committee that in 1975 almost three-quarters of the young married women (ages 18-24) expected to have no more than two children. Good or bad—who knows? But it's changing the tradition, society and America. "The conventional view of the American family as headed by a male who is the sole wage earner is simply not supported by the facts," Alice Yohalem of Columbia University says with finality.

There isn't space to tell about the migrations. The flow of people from the cities has been enormous. It is mass suburbanization. Big cities are nearly all losing population; school enrollment dropped by as much as 24 percent among the 27 largest. What happens then? "Cities are increasingly left with the least educated, the very poor, the non-English-speaking, etc., all of whom demand much more costly social services and can pay little of the expense," says Dr. Jerry Fletcher of HEW. Look at Manhattan.

One nice thing is that the old aren't so "old" as they were. It's come to the attention of Congress which has just made 70 the youngest age at which it will permit companies to enforce mandatory retirement.

Life expectancy continues to rise. A man born in 1900 could expect to spend only 16 years of his life doing something other than earning a living; for one born in 1970 the period rises to 27 years, says demographer George Kuper. And another points out that the spry 65-year-olds of each recent generation seem to be "in much better physical and mental shape" than the ones before.

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Serving America's Union Families

Comparative Financial Review

	Years ended December 31, 1977	1976
Income		
Life premiums	$22,340,297	$16,150,742
Accident and health premiums	25,683,413	23,593,214
Investment and other income	4,799,481	4,090,525
Total income	52,823,191	43,834,481
Benefits and expenses		
Life claims and other benefits	4,126,231	3,735,055
Accident and health claims	12,430,024	11,644,002
Increase in liability for future policy benefits	12,196,239	8,711,984
Amortization of policy acquisition costs	5,183,133	4,431,061
Commissions	5,943,151	5,224,771
General expenses and insurance taxes	5,869,697	5,652,642
Dividends to policyholders	298,064	299,032
	46,046,539	39,698,547
Income before income taxes and realized investment gains (losses)	6,776,652	4,135,934
Provision for income taxes		
Current	—	—
Deferred	1,909,150	1,209,252
Income before realized investment gains (losses)	4,867,502	2,926,682
Realized investment gains (losses)	11,364	356,057
Net income	$ 4,878,866	$ 3,282,739
Earnings per share		
Income before realized investment gains (losses)	$ 2.88	$ 1.76
Realized investment gains (losses)	.01	.21
Net income	$ 2.89	$ 1.97

Assets	$116,000,000
Insurance in Force	$ 1,289,000

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

June 24, 1978

A Bribe Without Payoff

"These are arms for peace," all the president's men told us, and they even persuaded a very skeptical Senate. In a blitz comparable in its magnitude only to the campaign to have the Panama Canal treaties ratified (but *sui generis* in its ugly baiting of Israel's friends), the administration won what its spear carriers said was an indispensable instrument for maintaining leverage with the "moderate" Arabs. That's a squeamish description of a "bribe," of course. But now Jimmy Carter is fast finding that he cannot buy the Arabs for peace. He cannot even rent them temporarily for the purpose.

What the Arabs have put on the Middle East market is not their politics, but their oil—and its consequence, a vast capital investment surplus. We can buy these commodities with our politics, and we have. But their own politics is not for sale. Let us at least recognize the integrity of their historical commitments. They are proud peoples, and their new status as superpowers does not make the Israeli presence in the region any more palatable to them.

On the contrary: the planes and weapons we have consigned to Saudi Arabia (which, even before the recent F-15 transaction, exceeded in value all US arms sales to Israel throughout its history) and our gradually unfolding role as supplier to Egypt have hardened the views of these two Arab governments concerning the suspended Ismailia-Jerusalem negotiations. And our own country is far from the only zealous seller of arms to the Arabs. The Russians equip their clients; the French will equip just about anyone at all. According to evidence accumulated by the London-based Institute for Strategic and International Affairs and the Stockholm Institute for Peace Research, by 1980 the ratios of arms between the Arab confrontation states and Israel will be 3.8 to one in combat aircraft, 3.6 to one in tanks, 20 to one in various missile systems and at least six to one in armed forces. Dr. Zbigniew Brzezinski is no naif, and he must know that these tempting circumstances are not likely to incline the Arabs toward flexibility.

Even as the establishment press was trying to elevate Senator Abraham Ribicoff from an ethnic political hack to the status of statesman for his role as the Senate's sensible Jew and the president's eager point man on the plane deal, much of the sense he was supposed to be talking turned out to be nonsense, particularly the stuff about rewarding Arab flexibility. Most disappointing of all to those who cared to notice (and many didn't) has been the behavior of President Anwar El-Sadat, the latest member of the *l'état c'est moi* club. Here he was, just about everyone's new foundling and also—but that's not so special—President Carter's "good friend," reviving in his country the most onerous manifestations of tyranny. "Just imagine the howl," observed a seasoned Foggy Bottomer, "if the Israelis were to expel one foreign journalist."

Sadat has made clear—while rattling his sabre with ominous references to the July 23 "Anniversary of the Revolution" and the October expiration of the UN emergency force—what his negotiating position is. In fact, it is not a negotiating position at all. On June 6, he told his Second Army massed on the Suez Canal that he had broken off the talks of the bilateral political committee in Jerusalem because Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Dayan had argued that peace required compromise. Concrete compromise, alas, remains for Sadat the intolerable concept. With his insistence that there is nothing tangible to compromise about and his threats of renewing the war option (and presumably now willing to sacrifice the million Egyptian lives he said he had spared with his trip to Jerusalem), Sadat has demonstrated that he expects a capitulation by Israel on every front—including issues on which no other Arab ruler has given, or would give, him the authority to speak.

The American illusions about Saudi Arabia's political designs, as opposed to those of Egypt, cannot be blamed on any legerdemain like Sadat's your-state's-security-for-my state-visit sojourn in Jerusalem. Unlike Sadat, the Wahhabis in Riyadh have not given us any confusing signal. What we assume—taking our obsession with preserving wealth to be everybody's obsession—is that the rich prefer stability to chaos, peace to war. Auguste Comte announced the same illumination

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just as capitalist Europe was embarking on history's most awful death happenings. The relative moderation of Saudi Arabia in the past was based on its inability to contribute anything significant to the Arab military struggle. No such excuse is vouchsafed the royal family now. It is now capable of doing much more than caning two hapless Brits who brewed some beer. In any case, nothing the Saudi monarchy has ever said, let alone done, can justify optimism that it will help to make a permanent place for Israel in the Middle East. That might, in fact, be in its long-range interests, given its quite realistic fears about Communism, Russians, and the left ultras among their cousins. But a country that balks at letting an individual Jew visit is not likely to want three million Jews to stay.

All this is not to say that we are wholly without hope for progress toward a settlement. Nor that Israel under Begin is without culpability in the present impasse: Jewish Judea and Samaria is a cartographer's fiction, as wicked as it is false. But an accommodation requires that the Arabs not believe that they can up the ante and the US will force Israel to pay the price. Even if the best happens in the Middle East, Israel will be forced to live more dangerously than any of its avid counselors would dare to live themselves. The concessions it has unilaterally offered the Egyptians are concessions that can be calculated in periled human life. Peace, in any case, is not exactly the natural state of this post-colonial world. That's one reason why the arms game is such a reckless enterprise: warlike impulses are dangerous enough even when they're not credible. So we've done one more reckless thing in the Middle East, and probably it won't be our last. But we might try—in the spirit of even-handedness, let's say—to insist that the Arabs too must compromise, and compromise tangibly. First of all, they must agree to talk.

On the Other Hand

Africa's Vengeance

Africa has long had recurring periods in geopolitical fashion, usually when non-African blood has been spilled somewhere on the continent. One such feverish period followed the atrocities in Zaire's Shaba province. President Carter, his national security adviser, Zbigniew Brzezinski, and most of the American media pronounced Soviet imperialism and its Cuban mercenaries as responsible for Katangan *tigres* who murdered and pillaged in the raid. A consensus grew that this time, after all the trouble-making in Angola, Rhodesia, the Horn, Moscow had gone too far. *The New Republic* apparently has joined this new hardline consensus (see, for example, "Talking Tough Versus Acting Tough," *TNR*, May 27). There is talk now about major new military aid for Zaire and other African states, about airlifts and counterinsurgency advice and about "drawing the line" on the Russians.

The time may well have come to get tough with Brezhnev and his bullying fellow oligarchs. But is Africa the place? Before we march anybody out to skirmish for such high stakes, we should choose our ground carefully. Africa reserves what Conrad called a "vengeful aspect" against the pretenses of outsiders.

One aspect of Africa's vengeance is the chronic instability of its post-colonial politics. Africa's 40-odd states, their frontiers determined by the wanderings of traders or often equally random diplomatic bargaining in London or Paris, include hundreds of tribes and ethnic groups, still harboring ancient feuds. With a handful of exceptions that could not bear much close scrutiny, none of Africa's modern states is a democracy. None is without the pervasive corruption of poor nations, an ambitious military often disdainful of civilian rule if not already in power and a recent history of political turmoil, often accompanied by bloodshed. Few have made honest, humanitarian use of what paltry aid the rest of the world has given them the last 30 years. And all regard both East and West with the very reasonable suspicion of people who have been killed, enslaved, robbed and proselytized by foreigners of other colors and faiths for at least 700 years.

Rebellions in Africa—be they the *simbas* (lions) in the eastern Oriental province of the Congo in 1964, the Biafran troops in Nigeria, Eritreans in Ethiopia, persecuted Lugbara in Uganda, Arabs in Chad, the decimated Hutus in Burundi, the Tutsi in Rwanda, suppressed minorities and majorities and guerrillas from the Western Sahara of Morocco across the continent to the splintered black revolutionary groups in Rhodesia and South Africa—are shaped by local irredenta that have little or nothing to do with ideologies or balances of power elsewhere. However legitimate General Mobutu's regime may claim to be in Shaba, however awful the Katangan reprisals against Africans as well as Europeans, there is no question that the raid began (and succeeded as far as it did) not only or even mainly as the frenzied escapade of exiles instigated by the Russians or Cubans, but rather as a genuine regional revolt with a popular base—if not in pro-Katangan nationalism, at least in the widespread discontent with Mobutu's petty family tyranny from Kinshasa. In any case, all this has a complex *local* history: Mobutu's post-independence maneuvers against both Patrice Lumumba and Katanga's Moise Tshombe in 1960-61; the abortive Katangan revolt in 1962-63; the bloody Stanleyville uprising and paratroop rescue in 1964; the Mobutu coup in 1965; tightening dictatorship, discrimination and exploitation by the central government in Shaba for the last decade; and the

(continued on page 8)

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Correspondence

From sea to shining sea

To the editors:

Golly, it's been good fun watching the passing parade during this last decade-and-a-half. I particularly enjoyed the warm applause that was showered upon America by Americans as the country faced the events and conditions that have characterized the era.

When the Vietnam war came on the scene it was good that no one called it immoral, that no one thought our conduct imperialistic or genocidal, and no one announced that America suffered from an arrogance of power. In a larger context, no one rewrote history to say America started the cold war, and no one teaches it in our universities to unsuspecting students. When President Kennedy was killed, I was glad to see that no one said we're all guilty for having created a violent society.

When urban riots flared it was gratifying that they were never ascribed to "white racism." Indeed it showed great maturity throughout the last 15 years that the epithet "racist" has been used so sparingly about a nation that, after all, is making great headway on racial matters.

I could go on. Environmentalists never said "the enemy is us," never referred to "the Gross National Pollution," never mentioned that the suburban dream has turned into an American nightmare. Feminists never denounced America as sexist, never allowed as to how women were treated as "chattel."

No one recently has said American presidents act like imperial viziers; and no one has said that the CIA is a rogue elephant.

No one in recent years has said work in America has turned boring, servile, meaningless; that, after all, would be silly in a society such as ours. And it was nice that no one attacked "middle class values": that would have been a wretched way to view decent people trying to make their way without bothering anyone.

Observers of our economic scene were particularly moderate. Neither the left nor the right attacked Big Labor. And how fortunate we were that Big Business has not been castigated—after all, the system works pretty well at producing and distributing goods and services, doesn't it?

Accordingly, as I look back over these quiet, prideful years I understand why Michael Kinsley ("Washington Diarist," *TNR*, June 3) would feel that my PBS television series "In Search of the Real America" was attacking straw men. As Kinsley asks, "Where is the chorus of failure and guilt?" Apparently, there wasn't anybody there during those years but Mr. Kinsley and his fellow yea-sayers, loudly proclaiming, "America is making progress."

Ben J. Wattenberg
American Enterprise Institute
Washington, DC

Restyling their image

To the editors:

So the French have abandoned their own peculiar brand of neutrality and, in an attempt to resurrect their past colonial glory, rejoined the defenders of Western values ("The New French Line," *TNR*, June 10). Willing to assume the role of West Africa's *gendarme* themselves, they have suggested that Britain become the guarantor of East Africa and the white-ruled states.

One could take the position that what the French decide to do by themselves is their own business. For the US, however, to endorse their actions and make them an integral part of our own Africa policy is something else entirely. The last time we started mopping up after the French, it cost us 55,000 American lives and resulted in the most disastrous foreign policy adventure in this country's history. Let's not sign the check again if it means picking up somebody else's tab.

Peter C. Bruce
Washington, DC

Criss-cross

To the editors:

I do wish jazz musicians like Betty Carter ["Michael Ullman on Jazz," *TNR*, May 27] would stop perpetuating such half-truths and/or outright untruths as "black audiences were more demanding than their white counterparts . . . a second Sarah Vaughan would never have the respect of the black community." Well, Carmen MacRae *is* highly respected by the black community even though her early sound was virtually indistinguishable from Ms. Vaughan's. Ditto for Maxine Sullivan who even today sounds exactly like Ella Fitzgerald. And Etta Jones is a carbon of Lady Day. Certainly, none of the achievements of these truly fine jazz singers should be diminished simply because they chose their models wisely, but neither should the achievements of Stan Getz or Anita O'Day be looked upon lightly.

Furthermore, I hate to disillusion Ms. Carter but most black jazz vocalists of the 1940's and 1950's did not choose basically black material but instead relied heavily upon white musical roots i.e. Cole Porter, George Gershwin, Irving Berlin, Rodgers & Hart. *Imitative . . . perhaps.*

Franc Martarella
New York, New York

Sick or tired?

To the editors:

In Dr. Richard F. Spark's article "Legislating Against Cancer" (*TNR*, June 3), we can finally see expressed in clear language a view which many members of the medical profession share but are ashamed to admit. According to this view, our society should give priority to the treatment of existing cancers and cancers to come—rather than to the elimination of known cancer-causing agents from our environment.

After accepting as "probably correct" the finding that "eighty to 90 percent of all cancers are caused by environmental factors," Spark goes on to attest the *inevitability* of these "factors"—including nitrates, estrogen, and saccharin—to our present lifestyle, and nonchalantly describes them as "frequently useful . . . and unfortunately ubiquitous." Spark's seemingly complete abdication of the will to *prevent* rather than merely treat cancer is a truly alarming phenomenon. The cheap cynicism and facetious irony which characterize his article are no substitute for a serious concern with the problem of cancer in this country—a problem which seems to be growing at a rate even greater than that of the inflation of doctors' fees.

Joan Kessler
New Paltz, New York

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mounting unrest, including another armed invasion by the Katangans a year ago, before the Cubans were in the border area in any strength. To blame the most recent incident on the Soviets (who were anti-Katangan and pro-Lumumba in the early 1960s) is frighteningly reminiscent of the cultural and historical ignorance of those American policy makers who saw Vietnam's venerable hatreds between North and South as a contrivance of Peking or Moscow, or who cast the Cambodians as traditional allies of Saigon. But then, we

It's Germans, Not Cubans

Now that Washington has tied itself to the tail of President Giscard d'Estaing's interventionist policy in Africa—against British advice—it will be disappointed to learn that African opinion generally does not favor trying to fight Russian intervention with Western intervention. The plan hatched between Carter and Giscard in Washington early in June proposed that the NATO powers should intervene only when invited to do so by the Africans themselves. They then publicly pledged logistical support to a non-existent Pan-African Regional Military Force. Almost immediately, such a force miraculously appeared. Actually it is just a Moroccan group to which a few units have been added from the Ivory Coast and Gabon, two of black Africa's most conservative states, with a late entry of Egyptian artillery.

Inevitably the creation of this force, to rally to the assistance of President Mobutu's miserably demoralized army in Zaire, bore the label of "made by NATO" even before it got off the ground and into US Army C-141s. Serious nonaligned African leaders, like Tanzania's President Nyerere, resent this label. "It is the height of arrogance for anyone else to talk about establishing a Pan-African Force to defend Africa," he has said. And he is obviously right. If Africans had themselves first set up such a force (as they did after the first invasion of Shaba in 1977), and then appealed for foreign assistance, the whole enterprise would have been seen in a different light.

Fortunately, the Carter administration has built up enough goodwill in Africa—thanks largely to Andy Young—to extricate itself from this deplorable error. But there is another worrying aspect about this latest lurch in the policy of the Carter administration: its obsession with Cubans. The Cuban leadership has repeatedly said that it played no part in the latest invasion of Zaire's Shaba province by the Front for the National Liberation Committee (FNLC). I believe them. There is not the slightest evidence to link the Cubans to the FNLC's latest enterprise, despite White House claims to the contrary. House Speaker Tip O'Neill said on June 5 that he had been told by Admiral Stansfield Turner that the CIA has photographs of Cuban military leaders with rebel troops in Zaire. Why were these alleged photographs not shown to the congressman? Turner himself told reporters: "We are not saying they [the Cubans] did not go in. We are not taking the position that they did. The evidence is not hard in one direction or the other." But if these photos exist, they should be conclusive. And if they do exist, why aren't they published? Turner says only, "We have sufficient evidence to draw the conclusion that there must have been Cuban involvement in the training and equipping of these insurgent forces."

The rebels have only one training camp in Angola, at a place called Chicapa, which is rather like a big farm with some 35,000 people, including women and children. They are mainly Lunda, the same people as those living across the border in Shaba. Being anti-Mobutu they helped the MPLA forces in the civil war in Angola in 1976, fighting the Zaire-supported FNLA. At that time they were certainly trained and equipped by Cubans.

More recently, however, the FNLC has indulged in large-scale diamond smuggling as a means of raising funds for its struggle. This activity was strongly frowned upon by the Angolan authorities, who also were concerned about the FNLC's recruiting of new supporters from among the Lunda across the border. President Neto of Angola apparently decided that the situation along that part of his border had to be brought under control and the diamond-smuggling stopped. He entrusted the Cubans with the role of policing the area and maintaining security. The Cubans (according to Western diplomatic sources in Angola) have expressed strong political and military criticisms of the FNLC, and are unlikely to have assisted them in crossing the border into Shaba province.

My information is that the Soviet bloc actually entrusted the training and equipment of the FNLC to the East Germans, a decision taken at the ninth congress of the East German Communist Party in May 1976. It was agreed there to provide military support for the FNLC and to create 45 pockets of "permanent revolution" inside Zaire in order to work for Mobutu's downfall. The East German defense minister and another general were visiting Angolan defense establishments—including the FNLC camp at Chicapa—when this year's invasion began in mid-May. If these facts are known to an outsider like myself, they must be well known to the CIA. Yet all their evidence has been slanted to make it appear that the Cubans are the principal agents involved in the Shaba operation. This anti-Cuban information blitz might serve a particular congressional interest, but it is selective and, in all probability, inaccurate. The White House, members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and most of the American press seem to be excessively gullible.

Colin Legum

Colin Legum is an associate editor of the London *Observer* and editor of the *Africa Contemporary Record*.

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are talking about many of the same men, aren't we?

The people now alarmed by Moscow's prospective omnipotence in Africa might reflect that the Russians have been despised and/or eventually expelled by every major aid client on the continent over the last two decades. On the whole the Soviets have been even more heavy-handed, parsimonious, self-serving and racist in Africa than their Western rivals. They have done tolerably well only where they could exploit a criminal, Western-propped dictatorship—in Ethiopia, or Angola, or Mozambique, or among the Rhodesian liberation groups in which racial and regional repression have bred their old terrible twin: revolutionary tyranny. Just as there are no genuinely qualifying democracies on the continent, there are no authentic Soviet satellites either.

Another aspect of Africa's vengeance that should give pause to those who are spoiling for a fight there is the inevitable misuse and waste of aid from the West. Of nearly six billion dollars of U S grants and credits given to all of Africa since 1945, most has been poured into the pockets of regimes that could not employ it effectively simply *because* of their nature. The dole list includes over $300 million for the decrepit autocracy in Ethiopia, $600 million for Zaire, $250 million for a squalid little black caste tyranny in Liberia, over $850 million for the besieged monarchy in Morocco and more than $750 million over 22 years for the benevolent but sclerotic despotism of Habib Bourguiba in Tunisia. In several cases, US military aid has nurtured the very elements in the officer corps that later snuffed out reform or democratic prospects—a habit the Carter administration is continuing in its 1979 budget, with new military training grants to ethnically exclusive armies in Chad, Mali, and Upper Volta, all beset by economic crises and regional tensions.

For a generation our relations with Africa have been in the hands of a bureaucracy unusually benighted and incompetent. Left sullenly behind in their steamy posts when Africa lost its early cold war vogue in the 1960s, the officers of the State Department's African Bureau became the most stagnant and defensive of the foreign service ranks. As a generation, they have been wreaking their own vengeance ever since.

It would be perilous folly to pick Africa for some symbolic challenge round with Russia. The likely debacle would only embolden the Soviets and drain an already overtaxed administration. Our national interest lies in recognizing the narrow limits of our capacities on the continent, in patience and realism about the post-colonial agonies Africa will go through for years to come, and in a determination not to make matters worse. In the end, as British Prime Minister James Callaghan wisely reminded his strident NATO colleagues at the close of May, it will be neither the Cubans nor the Soviets nor Western expeditionary forces, but the Africans themselves who will decide the fate of their continent. Their politics are too complex, too vast, too molded by suffering and history and hate for it to be otherwise. That is our frustration, our warning and our ultimate protection. So we should choose somewhere else to teach Moscow the necessary manners of detente.

R.M.

White House Watch

Under Pressure

Here are some stories that tell a good deal about how Jimmy Carter conducts his presidency and how he and his White House assistants perform under pressure.

Before we get at the stories, a definition of the pressure in discussion here is necessary. It is cumulative, the sum of many different pressures. In essence, though, it takes a single and special and peculiar form. It arises from a creeping sense of inadequacy—not a sense at the White House that the President and his assistants are inadequate, but a sense among them that they are perceived elsewhere and by others to be inadequate. The consequence has been a series of extreme, despairing, sometimes panicky statements and actions that have been self-defeating because they have enhanced rather than diminished the impression of inadequacy. Recent behavior at the White House suggests that the place is pervaded by a fear, unspoken but discernible in observed events and attitudes, that the perception of inadequacy has gone too far and sunk too deeply into the public mind to be arrested and turned around.

Evidence that there is such a fear or at the least such apprehension dates back to last October. It was then that press secretary Jody Powell, who is also a general adviser and one of the preeminent Georgians around the President, began saying that there were flaws in the Carter operation and that they were going to be corrected. Once they were corrected, Powell said, the public would understand that the President was doing a better job than he was generally credited with doing. The attempts at correction included a modest reorganization and expansion of the small senior staff, mainly aimed at improving its capacity to explain the President's policies and programs and to mobilize public and congressional support for them. In mid-April Carter in effect told the members of his Cabinet that they thereafter would be expected to put his policies and programs ahead of their policies and programs and that he was prepared to impose upon them and their

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departments any degree of supervision and coordination from the White House that he considered necessary to make them do so. He professed still to adhere to the principle of Cabinet rather than White House government that he espoused when he was a candidate for the presidency. Since mid-April, however, the principle has been in tatters and it gets more tattered with time.

Once a week, for example, subordinate officials designated by the heads of the major departments are required to attend a meeting at the White House with Carter assistants. The purpose of the meetings is to make certain that the department heads and their underlings know what the President wants done and that the President's people know what the departments are doing. One of the first requirements laid down at these meetings was that each department submit to Timothy Kraft, a young veteran of Carter's campaign and White House service who was recently promoted to the senior staff, a roster of all present and prospective vacancies that the President may fill if he wishes. The positions may be full time, part time, in the regular bureaucracy or on the many special boards and commissions that Carter is sworn to reduce or abolish but in the meantime may find useful. Under Hamilton Jordan, the President's topmost Georgian and unofficial chief of staff, Kraft is in charge both of presidential personnel and of White House liaison with the Democratic Party. The idea is that presidential appointments and presidential politics will be more closely connected than they were in the first, or learning, phase of the Carter administration. The interest of department and bureau heads in political appointments, as distinct from hiring subject to civil service restrictions, is to be more clearly subordinated to the President's interest than has been true in the past. Department and bureau heads who have bucked at what they consider invasion of their territory have been told in no uncertain terms to shut up and put up with a degree of White House supervision that is new to them.

Within the White House and the entity known as the White House Office, an earnest and in some ways comical effort to reconcile the revised comprehension of presidential interest and requirements with Jimmy Carter's notions of staff numbers and limits is under way. Carter personally reviewed the WHO staff lists last year and decreed that the total of full-time employees should be 351 and, apart from a few detailees from other federal agencies, not one body more. Now, because of the aforementioned staff reorganization, there is a seemingly irreducible demand for at least 20 more job slots in the White House Office. Eight places were opened or soon will be opened by the recent demotion of Margaret (Midge) Costanza, the President's assistant for public liaison, and the accompanying reduction of her staff. Four more were made available by resignation and transfers within WHO (but not, as I erroneously reported some weeks ago, by deceptive shifts from WHO to the separate Office of Administration). All that leaves an excess demand for at least eight positions that simply can't be filled unless the President either raises his precious ceiling, permits the removal of some functions from the White House proper to the Office of Management and Budget or authorizes the creation of a new unit that would require congressional approval. The point of mentioning this sort of trivia is that after weeks of fooling with the problem Carter at this writing hasn't made up his mind and some of his senior assistants continue to quake at the prospect of challenging him to do so.

Problems that were by no means trivial had to do with the Soviet and Cuban political and military presence in Africa and its impact upon the stalled US-Soviet strategic arms limitation talks (SALT II). Carter complained to congressional leaders that several laws unduly restricted his freedom to aid US friends and hinder US enemies in Africa and elsewhere. The Department of State made public a summary of the restrictions with emphasis upon amendments putting a partial (not total) embargo on arms sales to Turkey and absolutely forbidding involvement of any kind, economic or military, in the continuing struggle for control of Angola. With his usual flair for contradiction of the President, UN Ambassador Andrew Young said that none of the restrictions kept the US from doing anything it should be doing in Africa. Frank Moore, the Georgian who is chief White House lobbyist, told Carter that this latest appearance of conflict between him and Young was bound to stimulate complaints to members of Congress from their constituents that the President didn't seem to be in command of his own foreign policy. On Monday evening, May 22, staff chief Hamilton Jordan met in his office with Moore, two assistant lobbyists, Jody Powell, Deputy Secretary of State Warren Christopher and Gerald Rafshoon, the Atlanta advertising man and unofficial communications adviser who has agreed to join the White House staff July 1 and is already installed in suite 175 in the Old Executive Office Building, Richard Nixon's hideaway office in his day. The group's subject was how to convince Carter that he had to clear up the confusion caused by the differences between him and Young and the even more troubling appearance of differences between Zbigniew Brzezinski, the increasingly pugnacious assistant for national security affairs, and Secretary of State Cyrus Vance. Moore mentioned these matters to Carter that evening and raised them again at his daily meeting with the President Tuesday morning.

Carter undertook to re-state his positions at a press conference that he was scheduled to hold in Chicago on Thursday, May 25. Until Thursday afternoon, when Carter flew to Chicago, Moore and his assistants sought the advice of Senators Robert Byrd, Russell

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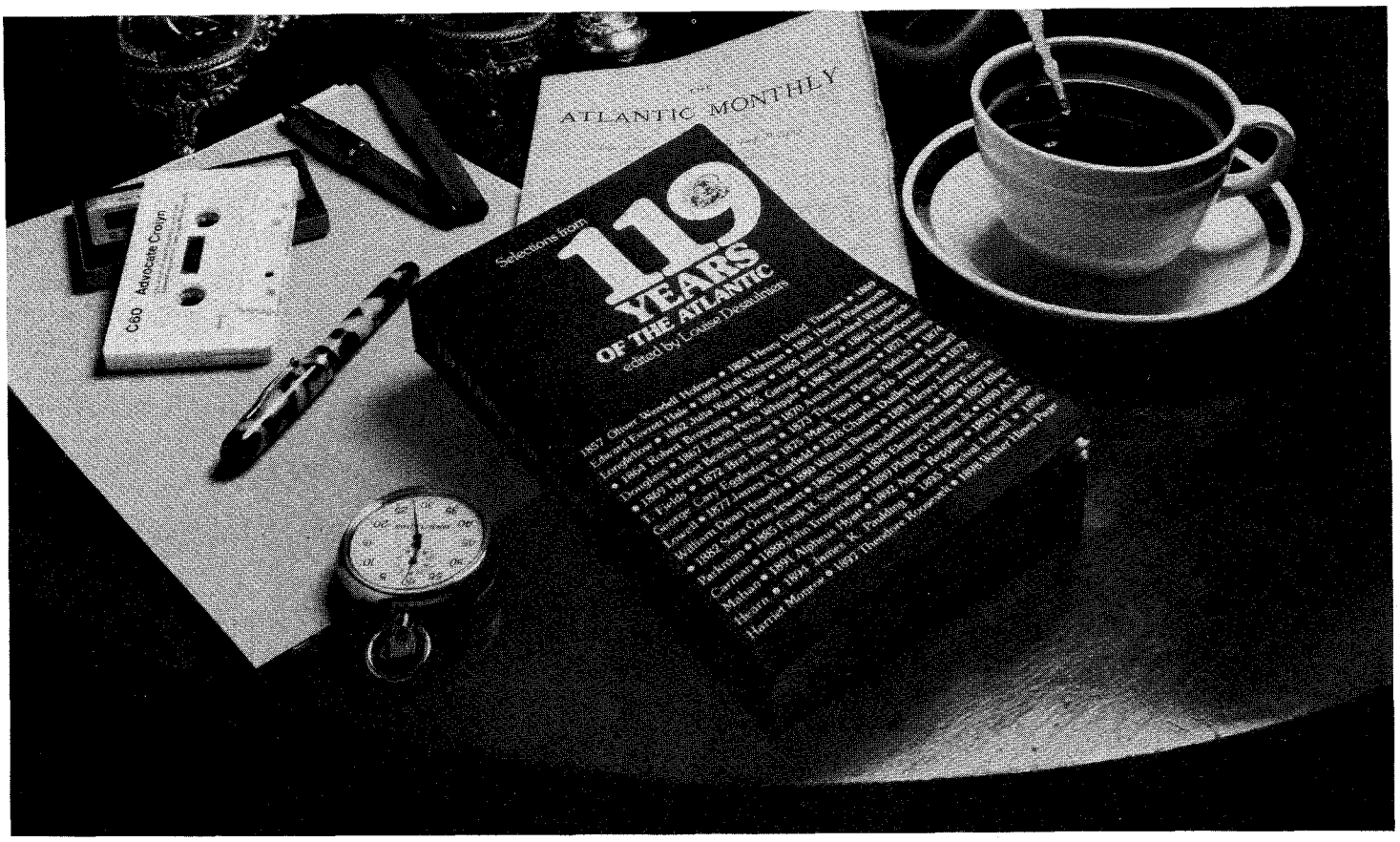

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Many pieces, such as Ernest Hemingway's "Two Tales of Darkness," are reprinted here for the first time.

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Long, Dick Clark, Howard Baker and Daniel Inouye, among others. Some of their views were relayed to the President by radio telephone during his flight to Chicago. Clark, author of the amendment prohibiting involvement in Angola, insisted that Carter say clearly that he wasn't trying to have it repealed. Byrd, the majority leader, said that Carter should say he was talking only about economic aid and not about military aid or military intervention. White House and State Department spokesmen had begun to say that Cuban military advisers in Angola had abetted the recent Katangese invasion of Zaire and Carter was also primed to discuss that allegation at the Chicago press conference.

Carter in a prepared statement and in answers to questions generally satisfied Clark's and Byrd's wishes, though not quite with the unequivocal acceptance of the Angola prohibition that Clark expected. "I have *no present intention*," Carter said, "of seeking its modification." At a later press conference in Washington, he dropped the qualification. He walked straight into trouble in Chicago with his unequivocal statement that "we believe that Cuba had known of the Katangan plans to invade and obviously did nothing to restrain them from crossing the border." Given the probability that it was a deduction derived from intelligence information that could not be published without divulging intelligence sources, and the predictable denials that soon came from Soviet and Cuban officials and finally from Fidel Castro, it was a foolish thing to say as flatly as the President said it. The folly was magnified when the CIA informed the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that Castro had told an American diplomat in Havana on May 17 that he had heard about the invasion plan in April and had tried to thwart it. Castro, building up his story, told two American congressmen and three journalists in Havana that he'd also heard about and tried to head off the invasion last February. White House and State Department spokesmen argued reasonably but vainly that Carter had not been obligated to mention in Chicago information that he then had and didn't think credible. The President had reduced himself to begging Americans to believe him instead of Fidel Castro. Carter would surely have been disbelieved if thousands of American troops and advisers had been stationed in Angola when the invasion of Zaire occurred and he had claimed that the US nevertheless had no responsibility for the attack. In these soured times that sort of argument would not wash and the President and his people should not have expected that it would.

The President tried in Chicago and again in a foreign policy speech at the US Naval Academy on June 7 to minimize—he didn't really try to talk away—the evident differences between Brzezinski and Secretary Vance. Behind the clouding rhetoric, Brzezinski is for telling the Soviet government that it can't have a SALT agreement unless it and the Cubans get out of Africa. Carter agrees with Vance and Secretary of Defense Harold Brown that a strategic arms agreement is too important to be sacrificed on the African block. Like Brzezinski, though one hopes not with Brzezinski's willingness to deprive the world of a viable SALT agreement if he can't get his way in Africa, the President befogs his position with repeated reminders that continued Soviet and Cuban intervention in Africa could destroy what little chance there may be of persuading 67 US Senators to ratify a viable arms treaty. So what? Some of Carter's people, lobbyist Frank Moore among them, argue for completing an agreement if a sound one is attainable and then fighting for it in the Senate. They are right.

John Osborne

On the Hill

Jarvis Fever

Following the so-called California tax revolt, members of the House of Representatives (where "All Bills for raising Revenue shall originate," says the Constitution) have been pantomiming grand slashing gestures at the budgets of federal agencies and departments. In two brief debates over the past two weeks, the House has voted to ostensibly cut $1.4 billion from the budget of the Health, Education and Welfare Department. The next target looks to be the Federal Trade Commission, whose latest busybody endeavor (as some see it) is a proposed inquiry into television advertising directed at children. Ted Risenhoover of Oklahoma, a third-term Democrat, has introduced legislation to cut the agency's 1979 appropriation by $21.8 million, or one third of its total budget.

Any other year, such a sweeping, across-the-board cut would have little chance of success, but the House's swift swing to the right following the June 2 California tax referendum (the Jarvis Amendment) has led to speculation that the amendment might just get through. Risenhoover's own country-boy rhetoric—he represents Muskogee, made famous by Merle Haggard's song, "I'm Proud To Be An Okie From Muskogee"—has captured the mood of the House, which is a feeling that less spending now may mean more votes later.

"Out where I come from in Oklahoma," Risenhoover told his House colleagues on June 2, "it is considered improper to slip up behind a man and gut him while he is not watching; so I want this morning to put the Federal Trade Commission on notice" of his plan to gut the commission, which he had inserted into

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the record when no one was looking the week before. Risenhoover proposes to end the FTC's investigations of the automobile industry, child-directed advertising, the pharmaceutical industry, the funeral industry—and more.

"The FTC is America's most out-of-control, arrogant bureaucracy," Risenhoover declared, "even worse than OSHA. . . . It seems that being a faceless, self-anointed but non-elected dictator of a dominion has gained great appeal in this town." As bad as the FTC is, Risenhoover said, it "might be just the starter; there are others that need the same help." And to make his point even clearer, he concluded: "This is one you can hang your hat on when you go home and tell the folks how you deal with the bureaucracy."

The FTC feared that his points might have been too clear, so it promptly printed up a 19-point defense of its investigations, current and pending, distributed it on Capitol Hill and began to sweat out the vote, which is still to come. FTC officials are hoping not to worsen the already strained relationship between the commission and the House.

The relationship will probably continue to deteriorate, however, as the FTC begins a wide-ranging and controversial look at the impact of television advertising on small children. The agency is empowered to investigate fraud and deception in the marketplace, and some experts have charged that such advertising—particularly for products containing sugar—manipulates children into eating such food in quantities that could harm their health.

The children's television study, and other recent FTC endeavors such as a new set of regulations for funeral homes, have generated accusations that the FTC is invading Americans' right to privacy by excessive rulemaking. As a result there is yet another proposed amendment waiting to sink its teeth into the FTC's appropriation. This one, offered by Representative Elliott Levitas, Democrat of Georgia, would make all new FTC regulations subject to a veto by either house of Congress within 60 days after they are issued. (Levitas also has introduced a bill providing a so-called "one house veto" over all regulatory agencies.)

The FTC is particularly frightened by this proposal. "It undermines the integrity of the Commission's rulemaking process," says commission chairman Michael Pertschuk. "There'll be a swarm of lobbyists giving Congress only one side of the story." Television station owners and undertakers, for example, are exactly the kind of prominent local businessmen who know how to spend those 60 days wisely.

An unusual parliamentary gimmick has become popular this June among congressmen seeking to score political points from Jarvis Fever. The procedure is straightforward: a House member introduces an amendment to cut or alter some agency's appropriation in a politically popular way; the House votes for it; an article appears in the newspaper proclaiming the vote in bold, black letters—and nothing happens. The budget stays the same.

Such was the case with the amendment passed in the House just after the Proposition 13 vote to cut the Health, Education and Welfare appropriation by one billion dollars. As proposed by Republican Whip Robert Michel of Illinois, the amendment would have no practical effect, but the 290-87 victory margin would and did. The next day, *The Washington Post* carried a story with the headline, "House Slashes HEW Bill by $1 Billion." Only later did the story mention that the amendment "may have no practical significance." The cut was completely painless.

How can this be? Easy. An appropriation bill has two parts. First there are the appropriations for individual programs and services; then there is the total appropriation. The sum of the first is supposed to equal the second, but the Michel amendment did not bother with such niceties. Instead the House voted to reduce the total appropriation by a billion while leaving the individual appropriations intact, and instructed HEW to get the billion out of "waste." The advantage of this approach is obvious. When the Carter administration tried last month to save money by cutting the budgets of individual HEW programs, the House issued a stern rebuff on behalf of the interest groups thus threatened. But no one is in favor of "waste." And what if HEW and Labor fail to find a billion dollars of "waste"? It isn't yet known what would happen if these departments surpassed their total allocation without exceeding the budgetary limits set on specific programs; probably nothing.

On June 13, six days after the "$1 Billion Slash," the House passed another amendment cutting controllable items in the HEW budget by two percent across the board, for a total of $384.5 million. Representative Clarence Miller, Republican of Ohio, introduces a similar proposal every year. Previously it has been rebuffed, but this year (much to Miller's surprise and delight) it passed, 220-181, after only a few minutes of debate.

A few days after the Michel frolic, the House voted, 237-143, to forbid enforcement of the new airbag standards in automobiles during fiscal 1979. It sounded significant, but since the airbag rule won't take effect until 1982 the amendment to the Transportation Department appropriation didn't mean very much. Still, it provided several members of the House another chance to attack the federal bureaucracy. "Let's send the bureaucrats downtown a message," said Republican Bud Shuster of Pennsylvania, the sponsor of the amendment.

Anyone watching the debate on the Shuster amendment last Monday must have noticed that most of the representatives tended to shout into their microphones. This had nothing to do with their colleagues' hearing ability—there were only 40 in the chamber—

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but it had everything to do with their constituents, who that day for the first time were allowed to listen to live radio coverage from the House floor. There was no way to discern, from the expressionless faces of the two technicians in the gallery's corner, whether any stations were using the live radio feed from Congress, but no one was taking any chances. John Dingell of Michigan probably got the best laugh from the listeners at home when he cracked that "the airbag is as useful as side pockets on a cow."

David Blum

The dangerous revival of the referendum.

The Unfiltered Voice

The initiative and the referendum are the brainchildren of America. It is fascinating to go back to Lord Bryce's monumental 1921 work on *Modern Democracies*. There was no referendum in Britain, of course, and none really in the rest of Europe, except for Switzerland. (It had been instituted in Estonia, he noted, and much good it did Estonia!) None of the other democracies, such as Australia or Canada or New Zealand, had done more than play idly with the idea. One would now have to add a few footnotes to his account—Britain broke the tradition of centuries when it held a referendum on the Common Market—but broadly it is still true. The referendum is peculiarly a brainstorm of America.

Even within America it has been peculiarly a brainchild of the Western states, with their primitive fascination with the forms of direct democracy. (The recall and the direct primary have been part of the same package.) Starting with South Dakota in 1898, some 20 states joined the experiment in the next 20 years—even Maine of all places, which must have lost its marbles. Then the movement petered out. The Populists launched the idea, but it was the Progressives who instituted it. At the Chicago convention in 1912 where the Progressive Party was founded—which the *New York Times* of the day briskly described as "a Methodist camp meeting done over in political terms"—a demand for the initiative and the referendum was included in the platform. Conservatives now find this ostensible reform lying conveniently to hand.

It has been this way from the beginning. Richard Hofstadter wrote: "The more ardent reformers who expected that the public will, once expressed directly, would bring a radical transformation of the old order were surprised to find the voters exercising their prerogative in the most conservative way, rejecting, for instance, proposals for municipal ownership, the single tax, and pensions for city employees." Again and again in the intervening years the normal conservatism of the popular voice, when a direct appeal is made to it, has been demonstrated.

Laws passed in the duly elected legislatures by their established procedures have been repealed by the popular voice when asked to vote on them as isolated issues. In this as in so many other cases, the warning of Bryce is confirmed: The referendum "places matters that have been carefully considered and debated in a legislature—matters often beyond the comprehension of the average citizen—at the mercy of the voter's ignorance or prejudice. It is an appeal from responsibility to irresponsibility, from knowledge to ignorance." Every one of these words can be applied to the California vote on Proposition 13, and conservatives of all people should shudder at the spectre that is being awakened. Let it loose in the land, what mischief will it not at last do? It is not enough that one may sometimes agree with the popular voice; what matter are the motives and the tone of voice, and the irascibility.

As one of the intellectual spokesmen of the progressive movement, Herbert Croly could not deny that "the principles on which the referendum is based are unimpeachable." But Croly never failed to warn against its fearful treacherousness. "It is based upon the old and baleful democratic tendency of always seeking the reason for the failure of a democratic enterprise in some personal betray of trust. It is never the people who are at fault." *Vox populi, vox dei.* It is the people who tax themselves by demanding so many services, but the California vote predicates that someone else taxes the people. How the voters for Proposition 13 would squeal if their freeways were now closed.

After the vote, the sponsors of Proposition 13 said that they did not expect many services to be cut: perhaps a few libraries, recreation parks, a museum or two—in other words, things in which they are not interested even though they may be desired by others. The point of representative democracy as distinct from direct democracy—of voting in an election and not a referendum—is that it forces one to relate one's own interests to those of others. This is one of the main functions of the representative, to adjust the needs of his own constituents to the needs of the constituents of other representatives, and this is what all the haggling in a representative body is about.

Croly was again firm. "The adoption of the initiative and the referendum substitutes a new principle for the one which has hitherto underlain American local institutions. Representative government is either abandoned thereby or very much restricted; and direct government, so far as possible, is substituted for it. Such a fundamental principle and tradition as that of representation should not be thrown away, unless the change can be justified by a specific, comprehensive, and conclusive analysis of the causes of the failure of state governments." But neither the sponsors nor the supporters of Proposition 13 had or has any intention of making such an analysis, and instead "the conclusion

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is drawn that the people cannot trust representatives to serve them honestly and efficiently. The course of reasoning is precisely the same as that which prompted the Athenian democracy to order the execution of an unsuccessful general."

Those words of 70 years ago summarize the attitude of people today toward their representatives. The people know best—that is what Bryce called the "dogma of popular sovereignty." And the people *do* know best—but only in choosing the men and women who should represent them. This may even be true when they choose fatheads: fatheads are often useful in a representative body. A constituency of fatheads may be right to elect fatheads to represent it in the legislature, a precept which some states in the union seem to have followed with tenacity. But to carry the dogma of popular sovereignty to the extent of saying that the power of the people can be exercised truly and effectively only when it is exercised by them directly is to deprive the representative system of all justification and function. One might as well have an electronic referendum on every issue.

One of the fears of the opponents of direct democracy has always been that by depriving the legislature of any real function, it would discourage men and women of ability and conviction from serving in it. This may be, bit by bit, what is happening. It is hard to resist the impression that, in Congress and the states, here and abroad, the quality of legislators is declining. They seem more and more to be people who are enmeshed in a sly relationship with their constituents, and it is sly because no representative institution, whether the leadership in Congress or a party, is strong enough any longer to mediate and give the representative the support he needs against his constituents.

Another fear of the opponents of the referendum has been that interest groups would be able to secure the passage of some law or proposition to their own benefit, or to oppose one, simply by concentrating their organization and propaganda on a single issue. There has been ample confirmation of this over the years, especially today in the effective use of the referendum process by so-called "public interest" groups. Almost all of the public interest groups are fighting for some covert private interest—the environmentalists, for example, fight for the privileged—and the devices of direct democracy give them their opportunity.

Even at their best, the public interest groups tend to be faddish in their concerns. More generally, the kind of issues that are submitted to initiative and referendum also tend to be faddish. This was again foreseen at the beginning, and was again put well by Bryce, when he noted that the responsible authority of the legislature might be reduced, even its genuine responsibility to the people, by "yielding to a temporary and factitious demand." There is no better way of describing the vote on Proposition 13, and yet presidents and governors, congressmen and senators, have scrambled to say that they have "got the message." If they have, they should send it back. That at least would be good for their souls.

In the famous *Model State Constitution* that was drawn up a generation ago, it was provided that "The initiative shall not be used as a means of making appropriations of funds." Proposition 13 did not actually appropriate funds, but it in effect intruded in the appropriation process. If legislatures do not have the power of the purse—including the power of taxation—then their final erosion as representative bodies has begun. The California vote will cause a serious dislocation of both the federal and state constitutions, of the relationship between the branches of government and of their relationship with the people—unless the referendum is now challenged.

All the original criticisms of direct democracy have been confirmed. But the danger today is that so many other developments are driving executives and legislators into a more direct relationship with the people than is healthy: the wholesale transfer of the campaign staff into the White House, the increasing power of the press secretary, the abasement before the findings of the opinion polls. But with Proposition 13 we are warned more ominously: the influence of the direct and unfiltered voice of the people is now out of hand.

It is the most reactionary constitutional development in our time.

Henry Fairlie

Politicians find nursing homes
a good investment, and vice versa.

Green From Gray

Last year the federal government handed out more than $6.3 billion to the nation's nursing homes. Most of the money went for the care of one and a half million old people who are poor enough to qualify for Medicaid, the government health plan for poor people. (Medicare, the government health system for the elderly, provides nursing home care for another 200,000.) Payments to nursing homes are the fastest growing expense in the Medicaid system. In 1970, the government's nursing home bill was only $1.3 billion, but the graying of America has caused a huge increase in both the number of nursing home patients and the profits to be reaped in caring for them.

The federal system for parceling out these billions is so generous that it has attracted into the nursing home business large corporations such as ARA Vending Services, Holiday Inn, Sheraton and Clorox. These conglomerates are squeezing out many small, non-profit nursing homes, as well as the sleazier sort of

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businessmen who have been prominent in the business in the past, such as New York's notorious Bernard Bergman. The way the system works now permits more genteel sorts of abuses, as well as the crude frauds and degrading treatment of the past. The movement of establishment businesses into the nursing home field has given the industry a great deal of clout on Capitol Hill and in statehouses across the country. Fueled by millions of dollars in campaign contributions, especially at the state level, the nursing home lobby has managed to turn back repeated efforts to reform the system that allows fraud and abuse to flourish.

The Medicaid system is administered by the individual states. The federal government reimburses each state for half to three-quarters of its expenses, depending on the state's per-capita income. The states have considerable flexibility concerning the health services they offer to the poor under Medicaid and the level of reimbursements. In the 1960s, most states reimbursed nursing homes for their Medicaid patients on a "flat fee" basis of a set amount per patient per day. This meant that the operators' profit was determined by how little they could manage to spend on their patients.

After some horror stories were uncovered, Congress decided in 1972 that the flat fee system was too strong an encouragement of economy and passed a law requiring the states to adopt a "cost plus" method of reimbursement. This permits the nursing home operators to charge the government for their cost in treating Medicaid patients, plus a "reasonable profit." Following a suit by the largest nursing home lobby, the American Health Care Association, HEW agreed last October that nursing homes are entitled to a profit based on a percentage of their costs. This arrangement guarantees exactly the opposite incentive as the "flat fee" method: the greater the costs, the larger the permissible profit.

Predictably, the cost of Medicaid jumped dramatically in many states soon after they switched to the cost-plus method. The definition of legitimate reimbursable costs is broad enough to include even the legal fees spent fighting the state health department's attempts to enforce mimimum standards of care. Furthermore, there is almost no effort to assure that reimbursed expenses are legitimate. In theory nursing home owners must justify every expense to state officials and open their books to regular audits. In practice, there are virtually no limits on what the owners can charge to the taxpayers. It's enough, former senator Frank Moss once said, "to make defense contractors drool with envy."

Sometimes a nursing home owner will pocket a little extra by inflating his routine charges for food or medicine. But such subtlety is unnecessary since Medicaid accepts a wild variety of personal expenses as legitimate costs. In the unlikely event that such expenses are later disallowed, the owners merely have to pay back the money, with no additional penalty.

Medicaid has reimbursed nursing home operators for vacations, rental cars, theater tickets, legal fees, large quantities of liquor, interior decorating, real estate, mink coats, paintings by Matisse and Renoir, stereo equipment, yachts, sports tickets, residential landscaping and political contributions.

Another common abuse of the "cost plus" system is billing of patients for costs also covered by Medicaid. Investigators have found homes charging Medicaid patients for "extras" such as laundry, hand feeding, bed sore care and plastic bibs. Sometimes family members are told that their elderly relative on Medicaid will be put in a dilapidated part of the nursing home, but that for a few extra dollars a month a place might be found in the new wing.

The conglomerates that have moved into the nursing home business have introduced a new technique into the cost plus game. They set up wholly owned subsidiaries which do business with the nursing homes. Typically there will be a subsidiary that builds the buildings, and another that sells pharmaceutical supplies to the home and another that provides food services. The home procures services from these subsidiaries on a noncompetitive basis at inflated prices, and the profit (which goes to the parent company) appears as a "cost" to the home, which is reimbursed by the government. A less elegant version of this technique is for the home simply to demand a kickback from its suppliers; the kickback is added to the cost of the supplies, for which the home is reimbursed. The Senate Committee on Aging has found that *most* nursing homes with Medicaid patients demand kickbacks up to 25 percent from suppliers—ranging from groceries to laundries to undertakers—for the privilege of obtaining their business.

For many nursing home owners, the minimal risk of penalties or prosecution is made even more remote by political connections. Nowhere is the industry's influence more pervasive than in Texas. At least one-third of the nursing homes in Texas violate federal health standards. Yet few of the violators have been penalized or shut down. Occasionally Medicaid payments have been withheld from an offending home, but the money is usually restored soon afterward with little improvement in conditions.

During the 1976 campaign, the Texas Nursing Home Association contributed about $65,000 to 83 state legislators. Most donations went to members of the two committees that must approve Medicaid payment rates for the state's nursing homes. The legislators later voted $44 million more for nursing homes than welfare officials had requested. The nursing home lobby's political action fund handed out $13,000 to Governor Dolph Briscoe over several years, $5500 to Lieutenant Governor William Hobby and $10,000 for Senator Lloyd Bentsen's brief presidential campaign. The group also took care of several Texas congressmen

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and gave $5000 to Ford and $1000 to Carter.

The money has not been spent in vain. Repeated efforts by political mavericks in Austin to launch investigations into nursing home abuses have been stymied by key legislators. An innocuous measure to require every home to hold occasional hearings where elderly residents could voice complaints was torpedoed by industry pressure. State Representative Tim Von Dohlen killed a bill to require more training for nursing home aides, which would have made the facilities more expensive to operate. A few months later, Von Dohlen opened his own nursing home in Aransas Pass, Texas. Last year Von Dohlen pushed through a bill requiring a hearing before the state could cut off Medicaid payments to any nursing home violator.

The most powerful man in the Texas Legislature, State Senator Bill Moore, also owns a nursing home in Bryan, Texas. In 1975, state inspectors moved to shut down Moore's facility for massive violations. The inspectors found "dirty enema cans and bedpans on bedside tables." Some rooms had "an extremely strong urine odor." Prescribed medical treatments for the elderly were not being carried out, while special diets were ignored. One patient was "given an enema and left unattended . . . patient had expelled enema and was lying in feces."

The inspectors recommended that the state immediately cancel its Medicaid contract with Moore's nursing home. After months of stalling, Welfare Commissioner Raymond Vowell finally notified Moore in a letter that his Medicaid payments were being suspended. The senator reportedly threatened to retaliate by cutting the department's budget. (He denies this.) Soon afterward, the inspectors were admonished to give Moore's home a clean bill of health. Yet they continued to report serious violations. Nevertheless, Vowell rushed off a polite letter to Moore, his friend of 30 years, to assure him that all Medicaid payments to his nursing home were being restored. Vowell quietly resigned a few weeks after the incident was exposed.

Political pressure in Washington is a bit more subtle but no less effective. At the Four Freedoms Nursing Home in Miami Beach, for example, four out of five patients depend on Medicare. In 1973, HEW inspectors began warning Four Freedoms to stop demanding advance deposits from its Medicare patients. When the home refused to stop taking these illegal deposits, the inspectors recommended that it be closed. Four Freedoms fired off complaints to various Florida congressmen and senators. One of them reached Representative Claude Pepper, the 77-year-old chairman of the House Select Committee on Aging, who passed the complaint on to HEW with a routine "buck slip." This standard procedure was enough to frighten top HEW officials, who quickly reviewed the case and decided there was no real proof after all that Four Freedoms was improperly billing its patients.

But the complaints kept pouring in. Some Medicare patients were forced to pay as much as $500 to get into Four Freedoms. HEW again threatened to terminate the home's contract. This time, Four Freedoms turned to Senator Warren Magnuson, chairman of the Senate appropriations subcommittee that controls HEW's budget. HEW officials were baffled as to why a senator from Washington state would intervene for a Miami nursing home. The explanation is that two of the nursing home's directors are labor union officials. Magnuson has long been close to labor, which gave $58,000 to his last campaign. The maritime unions financed a Four Freedoms retirement home in Seattle run by one of Magnuson's oldest friends.

Soon after the home complained to Magnuson, Social Security Commissioner James Cardwell was summoned to a meeting with Magnuson's aide, Harley Dirks. Cardwell promised to be more sympathetic to Four Freedom's problems, and pressure was later brought on his inspectors to lay off the Miami home. Magnuson insists he doesn't remember intervening for Four Freedoms, and that his staff probably handled the complaint. In any event, no action was taken against the home once again.

Four Freedoms has other Capitol Hill connections. From 1970 to 1977 Senator Richard Stone of Florida was listed as a director of a Four Freedoms retirement home in Miami. The retirement home was largely financed by the maritime unions, which donated $7000 to Stone's last campaign. Stone's membership on the board is a direct violation of federal regulations. Stone said he was unaware that the retirement home had listed him as a director for the past seven years. He then angrily resigned from the board.

Stone's office helped Four Freedoms last year in securing a HUD rent subsidy. Stone replied to the home's request for help in a letter by assuring his "full assistance in seeking to remove these bureaucratic obstacles." His letter was slipped under every elderly resident's door. The senator says he never saw the correspondence and that his name was signed by an aide. But Stone's office passed on the complaint to HUD headquarters in Washington, which reversed the decision of its Miami office and approved the rent subsidy that Four Freedoms wanted.

Nursing homes get their political clout not only by cash contributions, but also by invoking the interest of a large and growing voting bloc, the elderly. What office seeker wants to be accused of failing to fight for old people in nursing homes? But the way the system works now, the interests of the nursing home operators and the interests of their patients are two very different things.

Howie Kurtz

Howie Kurtz works for Jack Anderson, the syndicated columnist.

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If citizens peddled false hopes as state governments do, they'd be in jail.

State Lootery

by Eliot Marshall

California, deprived of billions in state revenues by an old man named Howard Jarvis, may decide that now is the time to join its wicked peers back East in the lottery business. The temptation is great. As other states have discovered, lotteries and other organized rip-offs can supply a steady flow of cash into the state treasury without any of the nuisance of tax collecting. Citizens are more than willing to be robbed by the state if they are given a scrap of something to dream about in exchange. It doesn't matter that the dream is tawdry and rarely fulfilled. It suits the states quite well because it is cheap to manufacture, easy to sell and immensely profitable.

Gambling is on the rise, not only as a private business, but also as a state enterprise. There are now 15 states that run lotteries, all of which entered the market since 1963. Roughly the same number of states permit betting on dog races, twice as many permit horse track betting and two have casinos, all heavily taxed. The curious fact is that as far as the federal government is concerned, the whole industry ought to be illegal. It is only because Washington cannot impose its will on state governments that gambling survives in the US. Wherever federal agencies have jurisdiction, they discourage it. But since the late 1960s, the feds have been in retreat.

The Federal Trade Commission, whose mandate from Congress is to protect consumers against deceptive trade practices, has always regarded lotteries as inherently deceptive and unfair. If it had its way, there would be none at all. Its disapproval stems from the fact that in any large lottery, more than 99.9 percent of the players lose. It offends the FTC's sense of decency that anyone should openly peddle a product so clearly designed to seduce the gullible. Lotteries are in business to sell illusions; they would not make money if they were forced to be fair and honest. It should be pointed out that if they are judged on a scale of relative honesty, the legally immune state lotteries are much worse than private, illegal ones because they pay out least. The reason is that they must turn over 40 percent of their "take" to public projects like schools and hospitals, while illegal lotteries devote more money to paying off the players.

The FTC has never challenged the states for running lotteries because its jurisdiction is limited to the world of private enterprise. It may disapprove, but it can't touch fraud by governments. However, the FTC has come down heavily on private corporations that engage their customers in "games of chance," as the FTC likes to call them. These are similar to lotteries, but different in that you don't have to pay to join. (If you must pay, the FTC calls the game a lottery and closes it down.) Games of chance are run as promotion gimmicks, in the most familiar recent cases, to attract people to gas stations and supermarkets. The FTC published a formidable rule on gaming in 1969, designed to end the tricks it had uncovered. The basic guide is that every time prizes are mentioned, the promoter must publish a lot of pertinent information: the number and value of prizes to be given out, the number that remain to be won, the odds against winning, a simple and accurate explanation of the rules and so on. All of this must be included in every ad, every game piece and every ticket. The odds and prize information must be brought up to date at regular intervals. As a result promotional games of chance are almost never advertised on television any more. It would take too much air time to meet the FTC's requirements. State lotteries do not have to live up to such fastidious measures of truth, however. They advertise on the air all the time without mentioning odds.

The Postal Service and the Federal Communciations Commission take an equally dim view of games. Neither one permitted a lottery to be mentioned within its jurisdiction until the 1970s. Ads were simply banned. Then several states that had lotteries began violating regulations, and the attorney general at the time, William Saxbe, like a reluctant sheriff, took the states to court. Congress responded quickly in 1974 and 1975 by writing exemptions for the states into US Code. The result has been to make federal gambling policy rather confused. The FCC sternly punishes any station that dares to let private gambling ads on the air. One FCC enforcement attorney said, for example, that he had just turned down a request by a charity to advertise on the radio that it was holding a "Las Vegas night" to raise money for a good cause. Real casinos like the new one in Atlantic City are of course forbidden to advertise, even though they may be licensed by the state. Yet at the same time, the states are allowed to advertise their own numbers rackets. The only restraint they encounter, a vestige of former modesty, is the rule that a station may not advertise a state lottery unless the state in which it operates—or an adjacent state—has authorized the lottery. So a future

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California state lottery could be advertised in Nevada, for example, but not in Michigan. The Post Office has a similar rule that applies to the mails. Neither one seems to stir up much controversy.

Washington's bias dates from the late 19th century, when the nation's last gambling binge came to an end. There were many lotteries then, the most notorious being the one run by the state of Louisiana. The corruption it fostered, both in Louisiana and in other states where tickets were sold, provoked President Benjamin Harrison to wage a legislative campaign against games which he said "debauched and defrauded" the public. That campaign created the laws that are now the basis for the government's opposition to gambling. The 80-year prohibition is coming to an end, and gamblers, helped by money-hungry state governments, are about to regain their license.

State officials who have been swept up in the new gambling craze justify their programs in a two-step shuffle. It's useful to have two steps, because when one is challenged you can shift to the other. The first argument is that gambling cannot be stopped by legislation. Therefore, it's said, the best strategy for keeping it under control and for diminishing organized crime is to make gambling a state-controlled monopoly. The second step of the shuffle is that gambling is not a terrible vice in any case—quite fun, in fact—so why not convert gambling revenues to "good" purposes by channeling them through the state treasury to schools and hospitals? States that set out on the first step inevitably end up on the second. The reason for this is that, once launched, a lottery takes on a life of its own that follows a fairly well-established pattern. States that intend to hold drawings only once a month switch to weekly and then daily lotteries to continue to attract public interest. Revenues usually go into decline after a couple of years, and more exotic games and advertising tricks must be used to keep the enterprise afloat.

In addition, lottery officials, like the captains of any other enterprise, do their best to see that their business grows. Soon they find themselves copying some of the techniques used by criminal gambling syndicates, though so far they have not yet been willing to let customers gamble on credit. To the old techniques of the gambling world they add something new, however—the propaganda methods of Madison Avenue. The combination—privileged state enterprise, fueled by mass advertising, peddling dreams of wealth—is something that has not existed before. By comparison, the local bookie looks quite benign.

The spirit of the new industry was expressed well recently by the director of Maryland's lottery, Stanley Fine, in a speech reprinted in the Spring 1977 issue of *Public Gaming* magazine. "There is an acronym for a theme to follow in this regard and it is KISS, Keep It Simple Stupid." He copied the illegal numbers game "almost exactly" because it was "simple and successful." The state has a million-dollar budget for advertising its lottery, and this gives it a competitive advantage over the illegal game, Fine said. So do computerized daily payoffs and gala televised drawings. "To be able to sit there with your ticket and for one minute, that's all it takes, watch the balls pop up out of the machines and see whether or not you have a winner. That is the ultimate in recreation." TV recreation is something the illegal game does not offer.

Mr. Fine is plainly an energetic and imaginative public servant, but one must ask whether it is a good idea to have the government spend so much energy fleecing its citizens. The National Football League decidedly thinks it is a bad idea. The next gimmick to be used in state gambling, it's all but certain, will be sports betting. This is one area that's still dominated by criminals, and the NFL would like to have it remain that way. The Delaware lottery briefly experimented with football betting in 1976, but gave up after it found that state officials were less adept at setting odds than the underworld. Professional gamblers realized they could take advantage of Delaware's inexperience in bookmaking and collect a lot of easy money. Delaware dropped the scheme after one season, but before long another state may find a way to make the racket work.

The NFL sued Delaware to stop the unofficial use of its team names on gambling forms. It lost, but has put other states on notice that they will be sued if they authorize betting on NFL games. Jack Danahy, the NFL's chief security officer, explained last week why the league feels strongly. "We are not naive. We are not unaware of the fact that there is a great deal of gambling going on, but we don't think that the state or any governmental authority rightfully should come in and impose a gambling situation on our game. . . . Rumors are as destructive to us as actual attempts at fixing. The more gambling there is the more destructive it could become to the reputation of the sport. All you have to do is look at any other sport that has legalized gambling. The jockey that rides the favorite last, when he comes in, they're throwing cups at him and everything else." The NFL doesn't want the stadiums filled with people like that.

The states set out to control gambling by monopolizing it, but in the process they have become hooked on the vice themselves. The next logical step is to move from the simple numbers racket into the riskier business of sports bookmaking. The state lotteries already earn more than one billion dollars for the governments that permit them. Now the allure of an untapped new river of money shimmers on the horizon, and it is all they can do to refrain from chasing after it. In the circumstances, it is becoming more difficult for them to argue that their real intent is to stop the exploitative gambling trade. One suspects that they simply want to become the biggest and most successful bookies in an exploitative market they are enthusiastically working to expand.

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Arts and Lives

Stanley Kauffmann on films

Searching and Destroying

Go Tell the Spartans (Avco Embassy). This is the best film I've seen about the Vietnam war, excepting two documentaries. Glad as I am of it, I'm still trying to figure out why I went to the screening. The advance guff made it sound like another *Boys of Company C*, which it is not, this time with Burt Lancaster. I guess I went for three reasons, all of which paid off. The director is Ted Post who was knocking around Broadway 30 years ago and has made a number of films (including some Clint Eastwood numbers) which I haven't seen: I was curious about him. The screenplay is by Wendell Mayes (from a novel by Daniel Ford), who wrote the screenplay for one of the very first films I reviewed for *TNR*—a good submarine picture called *The Enemy Below* (March 3, '58); I was curious about how Mayes was holding up. The third was pure snobbism. The title had been changed from the novel's *Incident at Muc Wa* to the figurative one above. To choose a title more "difficult" and allusive seemed to indicate filmmakers of some interest.

This title comes, as you doubtless know, from Simonides's couplet about Leonidas and his Spartan band of 300 who fell at Thermopylae in 480 BC: "Go tell the Spartans, thou that passeth by,/ That here, obedient to their laws, we lie." (The British altered the couplet for one of their war cemeteries: "Tell England, ye who pass this monument,/That we who rest here, die content," and, ironically perhaps, Anthony Asquith used the title *Tell England* for his 1930 film about Gallipoli.)

All three of my reasons, for a change, turned out to be sound. In reverse order, let's take the title and the script first. The Spartan lines are inscribed in French over a desolate little French military cemetery in a desolate hamlet. It is 1964, early enough in the Vietnam mess for the French disasters to be fresh in the minds of the Americans, and early enough for the Americans to believe they could avoid the French mistakes. So the title stabs—with the idea of heroism wasted.

It is still the period when Americans were there chiefly as "technical advisers" with virtually no US combat troops, only South Vietnamese soldiers. The action involves a top brass decision to take that empty hamlet, in dangerous territory, for strategic purposes: we see the invasion and the withdrawal. Many of the ingredients of the script are stock, but then, to put it heartlessly, so are many of the ingredients of war. The field commander (Lancaster) is a major who has seen it all in World War II and Korea and who limps to prove it. He exchanges a lot of knowing looks with his captain (Marc Singer) when the green soldiers show their greenness. There is an idealist corporal (Craig Wasson) and a cadre including a black radioman, a hardbitten sarge, a medic spaced out on opium, a foolish second looey. And so on.

One factor redeems these familiarities—it even transforms them: and that's the script's attitude toward US attitudes and its depiction of the Vietnamese. Item: the top brass are shown to be aching for the arrival of US troops so that they can transform this muck-up into a real war played by real rules. Item: the scout-interpreter for the US (Evan Kim) is shown to be bloodily cruel, ruthless even toward women and children whom he says are Cong; he is also shown to be tragically right. Item: particularly in the person of a one-eyed old sniper who doggedly haunts the cemetery, the enemy is shown to be determined to win the war at any cost. Item: the provincial Vietnamese chief is shown to be a politico more interested in personal maneuver than in the well-being of his own men under US command. In sum, the film is drenched in the moral ambiguity of that whole decade of disaster. There wasn't much to choose between one side or the other in cold disregard of Geneva conventions. The real problems for the US were: a) justification for being there; b) if it was decided to "stop communism," what to do about the stupidities, wastes, and grafts among the US and the South Vietnamese which hobbled that ambition. In its modest way, this picture really faces these matters.

The sharpest moment comes near the end. The US command sends a helicopter to evacuate US personnel from the beleaguered hamlet. As they board the 'copter, the Americans beat back the Vietnamese soldiers who want to get aboard with them but who can't be carried, the same soldiers who gave the American officers their loyalty. They are now being left to the enemy. Obviously we are being reminded of the roof of the US Embassy in Saigon—later—in 1975. The next day, as the sole US survivor staggers away from the scene of slaughtered South Vietnamese, the year is inscribed on the screen: 1964. Eleven years to go.

Post directs it all with a clean, hard, action-film hand. He wobbles a bit with the acting: like many other directors he can't do much with Lancaster, but he lets some of the others lean on clichés, like Singer and his chewing-gum cynicism. Still the pace is good and the camerawork is sure. Under the titles Post pans around the base camp from the observation tower, with intercuts of some of the camp routines, like torturing a prisoner. The way this point is

Films Worth Seeing

Cat and Mouse. Smooth little French murder mystery, more charm than chills. Very pleasant.

F.I.S.T. If you don't mind US labor history used for movie melodrama, this is a pretty good one. Sylvester Stallone bulldozes through the decades.

Pirosmani. A gentle Soviet picture about an (actual) primitive painter, turn of the century. Done with a fine eye and dramatically successful quiet.

Saturday Night Fever. Scraggly script but hot proof of class strata in our cities. John Travolta dances like dynamite.

SK

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handled gives us justified confidence in the picture to come.

With his editor Millie Moore, Post achieves the *sine qua non* of war films, which is so often *non*—he keeps the geography clear in battles. And some technically difficult scenes are slipped in very easily. For instance, there is a sequence in which Lancaster is barreling along in a jeep when a helicopter overtakes him, signals him to stop, and lands beside him. It's done with such matter-of-course dexterity, only later do we realize the whole sequence was shot from a helicopter ahead of the one we see and that all the difficulties of doing it were subsumed in the effectiveness of the moment. Surely that's a sign of really good action filming.

Spartans is no earth-shaking masterpiece, but in its small-scale way it's strong, hard, forthright—very much more incisive about its subject than the star-laden, flabby *Coming Home*. The final effect of *Spartans* is as if a war *movie* had actually gone to war.

Two almost simultaneous events. First, *Variety* of April 26 ran the front-page headline: "NBC in Alltime $ Bet on TV Movies," with the sub-head "Web to Bankroll over 100 Features & Minis." (This last means mini-series.) Figures are unspecified, but the projects are detailed. The opening sentence of the story, which may prove to be of historical moment: "NBC-TV is putting more money into new-movie production than any other single entity in showbiz history."

Second, the American Film Institute has just published the sixth edition of its *Guide to College Courses in Film and Television* (Peterson's Guides, PO Box 2123, Princeton NJ 08540; $9.75). A few statistics. The previous edition, 1975, was 286 paperbound-book-size pages; the new one is 430 typewriter-paper-size pages. The number of schools offering film/TV courses has grown from 791 three years ago to 1075. There are now 307 schools at which one can get degrees in these areas; 12 schools offer doctorates.

Against those statistics, put these. The 1976 total of film theaters was 13,580, a bit better than 1975 but considerably below 1973. The 1976 total of "TV homes" was 71,200,000 and steadily growing. Add in the *Variety* story, and you can make quick inferences about where most of the graduates of those college courses are going to spend their time.

I never see the point in arguing with cultural history. As Walter Benjamin said, "Many art forms have developed and perished." When society no longer had any need of the epic poem and the masque, it dropped them and moved on. I do *not* think that, foreseeably, the film is going to perish, but it's quite possible that the TV film of the future may be to theatrical film of the future what the film has been to the stage in this century: the place that drains off much of the pop audience and the genre work—Westerns, horror flicks, thrillers, etc. I think that, in a certain mythopoeic way, the "live" theater has suffered from losing its pop forms and pop audience, but—theoretically, at least, if not often in practice—it has gained certain freedoms through its shift of spectrum. Put it this way: fewer and fewer trained and gifted people go into the theater just to do pop work: film provides more opportunities for it. The ones who do go into the theater are usually more interested in the theater's best possibilities. This may, on the statistical evidence, shift to become true of theatrical film as against TV film.

The Artist and the Citizen

The current attempt of federal, state, and municipal agencies to define themselves in relation to the arts coincides with an apparently unrelated event: the 150th birthday of a great artist, the Norwegian dramatist Henrik Ibsen.

These two events are separated not only in time, but geographically as well. What can a Scandinavian dramatist, who wrote mostly in the 19th century, have to tell us about the experience of being an artist in 20th century America? And what can he tell us about the relationship of the secular state—which is organized primarily to help create better material lives for its citizens—to the essentially spiritual question of artistic endeavor and artistic development? What in the world can he have to say to us about the complicated question of funding for the arts through agencies of the government?

Well, I believe this renegade Norwegian is in a position to tell us a great deal, if only because—like most of us today who work in the arts—he was continually forced to appeal to his government for money in support of his endeavors. Ibsen was one of the first to recognize that the state had responsibility not only for what he called "the happiness and welfare of the community," but also for "the development of the nation's life." "States like ours cannot defend themselves by their material prosperity," he wrote. "But states like ours can do so if they fulfill themselves in the service of culture, science, art, and literature." In part because so few statesmen understood the obligation to improve the quality of life through support of the arts, Ibsen always felt the artist and the politician to be fundamentally opposed, indeed, incapable of occupying the same space. "For every statesman who crops up there," he wrote, "an artist will be ruined." And why? Because "the state still sees in science, in art, and in literature only the decorations, not the pillars and beams of the edifice. I think it is about time this humiliating state of affairs came to an end. The man who does the artistic and intellectual work of a nation has a right to carry his head high. He has a right to protest when he sees that he is offered for his labors only a part of the surplus left over after the material needs of the nation have been satisfied, and only, of course, when there is a surplus."

Now it is plain that this was written a very long time ago, and things have changed a very great deal in the meantime. Why, the arts and the humanities are so universally recognized and appreciated today that each has its own National Endowment which our statesmen have provided with enough hard cash to run the Pentagon, I am told, for a full eight hours. Obviously, the arts hold a very high place in the hearts of our lawmakers, and this would have gratified Ibsen immensely, had he lived today. Imagine the delight with which he would have set aside his work on *Peer Gynt* or *Ghosts* to attack the multiple reams of fascinating application forms required to attract those munificent

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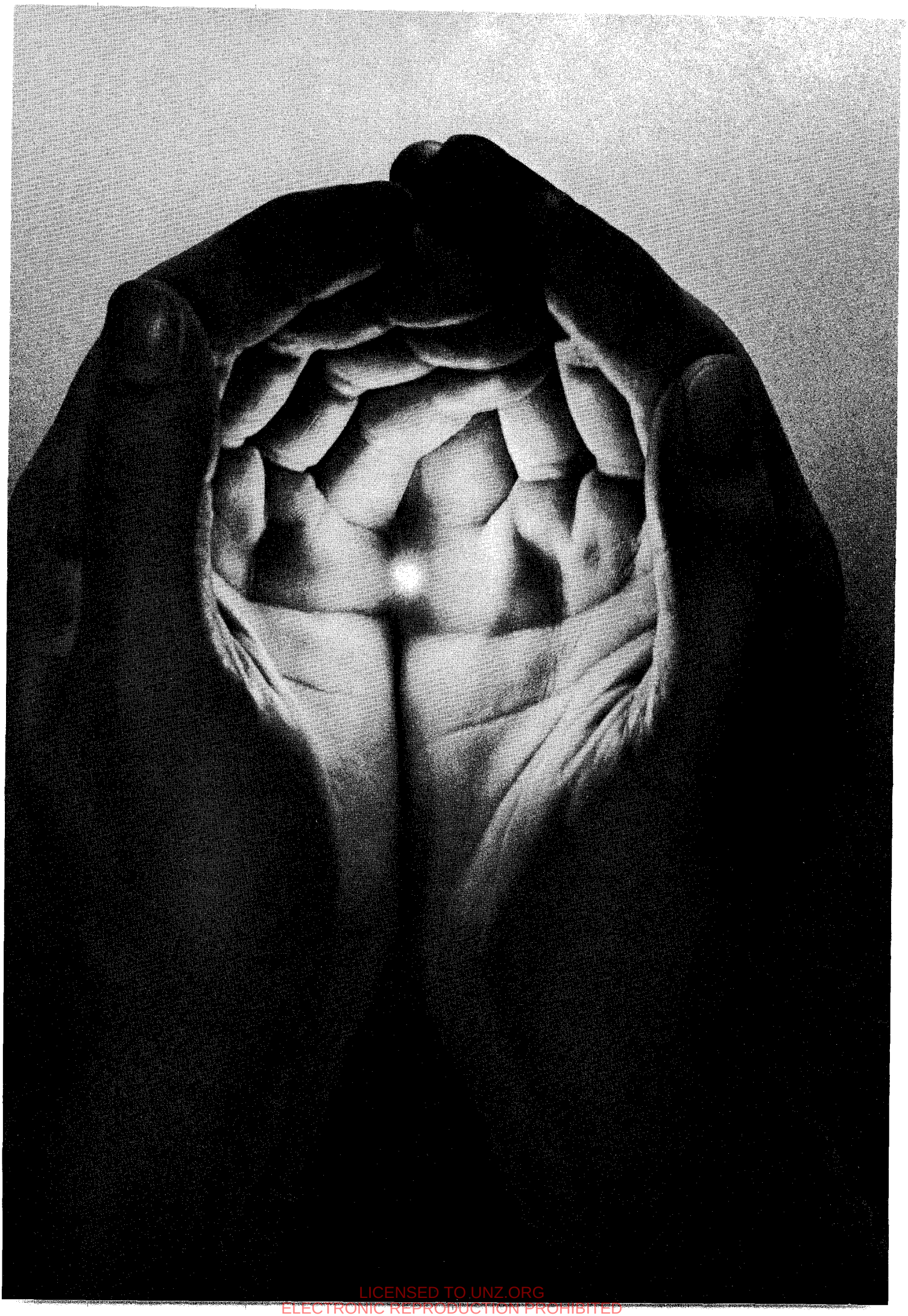

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sums, not to mention the extensive budget sheets, progress reports, and final reports that make it possible for our theater at Yale to receive enough money from the state of Connecticut to pay a portion of the salary of one actor, providing that actor is not too particular about the quality of his food or clothing. It is impossible to imagine the joy with which Ibsen would have suspended his writing or rehearsals in order to take a trip to Washington or Hartford, where he would be given the privilege of justifying his production of *The Master Builder* on the basis of how many people it reached in the inner city, or how effectively it satisfied the requirements of affirmative action programs. My irony is admittedly heavy, but irony aside, it is perfectly obvious that the relationship between the artist and the state has not really changed much since Ibsen's day. What has changed, I believe, is the official language—the way in which words can be manipulated and altered to prevent any change. Take the word *art*, for example, which in the titles of certain federal and state agencies now seems to be a synonym for sociology, psychological therapy, social welfare, crafts and hobbies, economic neighborhood building, racial and ethnic consciousness-raising, aid to the handicapped, and pork barrelling. It is true that the word *art* has a kind of magical power today; it is also true that the word is so imprecisely defined that, by some calculations, less than half of the pitifully small funds that have been allocated for art are actually going to professional artists and artistic institutions. The reason for this is not hard to determine; it is that the arts are now being used for political purposes. Perhaps in order to obscure the fact that the distribution of income in America varies scandalously, or that the communications media belong not to the people but rather to certain powerful corporations, our elected representatives have recently been trying to democratize the culture—with the result that quality in art is now less rewarded than its social utility.

This, I believe, accounts also for the current misuse of two other words—namely, "elitist" and "snob"—which are indiscriminately applied to anyone these days who tries to make an argument for artistic standards. It is forgotten perhaps that the word *elite* was once a term not of abuse but rather of commendation: it simply meant leadership. But if the word once implied quality and leadership in quality, it now seems to imply social standing and self-imposed rule, which further suggests that we are being confounded in our discussion of the arts by essentially political considerations. Lurking somewhere behind all this invective is the memory, for example, that Hitler once had an "Elite Corps"—and that these were not artists committed to enhancing life, but rather, vicious gangsters dedicated to ending it.

If the word elitism has been borrowed from culture and applied to politics, the word populism has been borrowed from politics and applied to the arts, with meanings that so far are honorific. It suggests that which is popular—the voice of the people—and the voice of the people, as the saying goes, is the voice of God. That the voice of God twice elected Richard Nixon president of the United States, the second time by the largest plurality in American history, is not always convenient to remember. The cultural populists must provide the illusion that all people are being satisfied, not only in their choice of political leaders, but in their choice of entertainment as well—and this means both a broad range of choice in theater, movies, TV, music, and painting, and the widest opportunity for personal creative expression, from the neighborhood rock group to the New York Philharmonic.

The impulse behind this is admirable. Still, there is very little danger today that mass taste will go unsatisfied, if only because satisfying this taste is a source of enormous profit for a large number of commercial entrepreneurs. No, the greater danger to a pluralistic society is that the less popular, more unpalatable forms of creative expression will somehow wither and die, partly because genuine works of art are not always accessible to large audiences, being thought difficult, provocative, arcane or experimental—at least, at first. In the best of all possible worlds, the highest forms of art would be the most popular forms of art, but our world, alas, is not perfect. That is why one turned with such hope to government subsidy—in the expectation that tax dollars would help preserve high art as it now preserves architectural landmarks. If these hopes have begun to die, it is partly because of false, unnatural equations on the level where the money is dispensed—the federal and state level—which are expressed in this flap about elitism.

But, I would ask, who is really more snobbish and patronizing—the one who would bring culture down to the people, or the one who would try to raise people up to the culture? Which is the more condescending attitude—the assumption that Shakespeare cannot be understood by the masses unless he is bowdlerized, synopsized, and strained into baby food, or the assumption that great works of art are not fully coherent unless they keep their original form? Chekhov wrote: "We must bring the people up to Gogol, not bring Gogol down to the people." And this is pretty much what Ibsen had in mind when he wrote of "the absolute necessity of democracy . . . to make itself aristocratic."

The words nobility and aristocracy are freighted with almost as many adverse meanings in our time as elitist and snob—for we live in an era when what the poet Yeats called "the mad intellect of democracy" has made a mindless egalitarianism the dominant social philosophy. But Ibsen was not saying that superior beings possessed the right to set themselves above the law. He was simply affirming the capacity—indeed, the necessity—of the human race to transform itself into something higher, purer, larger. Shaw said, "I would have my mob all Caesars instead of Toms, Dicks and Harrys." In a speech to the workingmen of Trondhjem, Ibsen himself called for a "new nobility," emphasizing that he meant not a "nobility of birth, nor that of wealth, nor of knowledge, nor of ability or talent. I am thinking of a nobility of character, of a nobility of will and spirit." The aristocracy he called for, then, was a natural nobility that transcended class and inheritance—to be reached through a compound of culture, education, art.

For whatever the blessings and benefits of political democracy, Ibsen saw that the democratization of culture could only be a curse; it signifies the corruption of artistic and intellectual values under pressure from electoral politics. The source of this pressure is a group of politicians installed in office by geographical, ethnic, racial, and sexual constituencies who are now demanding more distribution of federal and state money for the arts and humanities according to geographical, ethnic, racial, and sexual criteria. And so powerful are these pressures on the Hill that the two men newly appointed to take charge of the twin endowments both seem to feel themselves more accountable to the legislator and the citizen than to the artist or the humanist. In a recent interview in *US News and World Report*, this is the way Joe Duffey, the new chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities, described and

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confirmed the anti-elitist position: "Those who have accused the Endowment of elitism are saying that humanist scholars need to realize they must listen more to the public. The people of this country are participants in the shaping of our culture and shouldn't be treated as passive recipients of wisdom dispensed by experts. . . . Some of the talk about quality smacks of the worst kind of academic snobbism." *Humanists must listen more to the public. The people are participants in the shaping of the culture.* We've all heard this language before; it is the language of political oratory. But it is the first time, I believe, that it has been applied to artists and humanists, as if they were candidates for office. I fear it will not be the last.

All right, the question remains as to why federal and state tax money should go to artists, scholars, and intellectuals when their works do not directly benefit each and every taxpayer. It is the kind of question, as Ibsen foresaw, that could only be asked in a society blinded by materialism and utilitarianism, where the state sees art and scholarship as the decorations, not the pillars and beams of the edifice. Still, it is a fair question, and needs to be answered. I would say in partial reply that federal and state money should go to these things for the same reason that it now goes to libraries, even though the level of literacy is shamefully low, or to museums, even though most people prefer cartoons to Rembrandt. Somewhere, in the back of our minds, we still recognize that minority art and advanced thought are not justified by popularity contests, and that their influence, though not immediately apparent, will ultimately be felt by the masses of people. Christ began with twelve disciples before his teachings became the basis for a world religion; would he have been denied a grant by the National Endowment for the Humanities because the people were not participants in shaping his thought? Joyce, Eliot, Beckett, Van Gogh, Pollock, Stravinsky, indeed all the major modern artists, were barely read or bought or heard for years until they reached a wider audience; should they have been excluded from support because they didn't listen more to the public?

As Ibsen told us, the central obligation of a democracy is to make itself aristocratic; it is to rise above itself, not to lay back on the level of its lowest aspiration and achievement. And it is the central obligation of those responsible for government support of the arts to identify the best that is being thought and created, and to nurture the best accordingly. Is that possible in a society dominated by majoritarian, consensus rule, where the arts agencies are accountable to the legislators and the legislators are accountable to the voters? Perhaps not, but if not, we must begin thinking about ways to liberate these endowments and commissions from political influence and control. We must begin recognizing that the value of art is not determined by the size of the audience or the contributions to the community. We must begin acknowledging that an artist's vision is often fulfilled only by maintaining a certain aloofness from the state, even from party politics. "I receive more and more proof," wrote Ibsen, "that there is something demoralizing in engaging in politics and joining parties. It will never, in any case, be possible for me to join a party that has the majority on its side. Bjornson says, 'The majority is always right.' And as a practical politician he is bound, I suppose, to say so. I, on the contrary, must of necessity say, 'The minority is always right.' Naturally, I am not thinking of that minority of standpatters who are left behind by the great middle party that we call liberal; I mean the minority which leads the van and pushes on to points the majority has not yet reached. I mean: that man is right who has allied himself most closely with the future."

Not the conservative then, not the liberal, not even the radical, but rather the visionary artist with a stake in the future, who by fulfilling his vision would fulfill the only social obligation we have a right to ask of him. Can we live with this idea? A tall order in a democracy, but still not an impossible one; and the only hope we have that our country will ultimately fulfill its debt to the artist and understand his purpose.

Robert Brustein

Robert Brustein is dean of Yale School of Drama and director of the Yale Repertory Theater.

Wolf Von Eckardt on architecture

The Cranbrook Academy of Art

When Roy Slade took over as president of the Cranbrook Academy of Art last August, he first devoted his boundless, buoyant energy to the restoration of Eliel Saarinen's house. As president, Slade gets to live there.

Saarinen, who was already a famous architect in Finland before he came to this country in 1922, believed in the creative unity of art, crafts, and design. He was as interested in the design of a chair or a table or a common utensil as in the design of an entire city. And he turned his own house into a complete and spirited work of art.

Like the Cranbrook art school, which Saarinen helped found and which he directed for 15 years, the house gradually succumbed to the mediocrity of smaller minds. Slade and his wife Susan hunted up lost Saarinen originals, refurbished tarnished items and replaced others with new furnishings. They did not create a Saarinen museum. They revived the Saarinen spirit. I hope the Slades can do the same for Cranbrook. American art, architecture, and design sorely need what the Cranbrook Academy originally attempted.

The Academy is part of the Cranbrook Foundation, which also includes three schools, a science institute, a church, and other institutions, scattered over 300 acres of rolling, wooded land in Bloomfield Hills, 25 miles north of downtown Detroit. The entire spread was conceived, donated and endowed by George and Ellen Scripps Booth, owners of *The Detroit News* and a chain of other Michigan newspapers, who looked on their wealth as something of a divine obligation.

Their obligation toward the arts, George and Ellen Booth felt, was not only to collect and display it (they helped organize the illustrious Detroit

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Institute of Art), but also to create an opportunity for interaction of all the arts, for designing a setting in which architecture, sculpture, painting, weaving, woodwork, metalwork and such are but instruments in a grand orchestra whose music is a beautiful and harmonious human environment. The idea was first advanced in the late 19th century by the English Arts and Crafts movement of John Ruskin and William Morris and taken into the machine age half a century ago by the German Bauhaus of Walter Gropius, Laszlo Moholy-Nagy and Mies van der Rohe.

In retrospect, Cranbrook may have come closer to living up to this ideal than is realized even by its more prominent graduates such as designer Charles Eames, architect Harry Weese, furniture designer Florence Knoll, sculptor Harry Bertoia, city planner Carl Feiss and urban designer Edmund Bacon, all of whom had a decisive influence on the look of 20th-century America.

But there never was a retrospect. There never was an exhibition or book on the history and achievements of Cranbrook. Founded officially in 1932, just before the Depression, the school, as a school, never had occasion to be noticed. Only its masters, Eliel Saarinen and the sculptor Carl Milles, found acclaim—as individuals.

By the time World War II was over, building and artistic production resumed again, and people began to take an interest in design. Gropius at Harvard and Mies van der Rohe at Chicago attracted the limelight. Eliel Saarinen resigned as president of Cranbrook in 1947, although he continued to teach architecture there until his death in 1950. His son, Eero, worked with him and possibly eclipsed him with such romantic *tours de force* as the Jefferson Memorial arch in St. Louis and Dulles Airport in Washington, DC. Eero survived his father by only 11 years.

Milles's Fountain

As to the rest of the famous Cranbrook alumni, they got caught up in the whirl of the modern design revolution with no time to reflect on the meaning of Cranbrook in their lives or work. Eames, in partnership with his wife, Ray, went on from his famous chairs to films and exhibits that made computers comprehensible to ordinary people. Harry Weese designed some of the most attractive apartments and townhouses, cultural centers and churches in recent American architecture, to say nothing of the calm grandeur of Washington's Metro subway stations. Florence Knoll, with the help of some of the world's leading designers, set the style and standard of the furniture of our time, much as Thomas Chippendale dominated furniture style in 18th-century England.

Bertoia integrates his art with architecture and, for all their abstraction, keeps his sculptures sufficiently based in natural forms to give them great popular appeal. Feiss pioneered historic preservation and creative integration of worthy old buildings in new urban designs, many years before historic preservation and continuity in the cityscape became the rage. And Edmund Bacon—what would the heart of Philadelphia be today without the sensitive planning of Edmund Bacon? Each period in history, it seems, must rediscover the basic laws of the design of cities. Bacon did it for our period.

It may be absurd to claim a common denominator in the work of these Cranbrook-trained designers. There is nothing you could remotely call a shared style such as you find in the work of École des Beaux-Arts graduates or in the art and architecture that came out of the Bauhaus. Cranbrook was and is not an art school in that sense. It is, as Eliel Saarinen put it, "a working place for creative art." Only some 150 highly-trained and talented art or architecture school graduates are accepted, usually for two years, to pursue their studies in architecture, ceramics, design, fiber, graphics, metalsmithing, painting, photography or sculpture under the guidance of accomplished artists and architects.

And yet these two years, certainly the two years of working with Eliel Saarinen, seem to have left their imprint. The famous Cranbrook design-

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Frank Lloyd Wright and Eliel Saarinen

ers seem more versatile and flexible than the typical products of other academies. Their work plays in concert with the work of others. It is never an "ego trip," as the jargon has it. Nor are the architecture and designs that have come out of Cranbrook as strident, as hard and demonstrative as the imported Modernism. I find this particularly true of the buildings Harry Weese designed. They always have warmth and charm.

Whether this is due to Cranbrook and its idea of interaction among all the arts and crafts, or whether this is due to the genius and personality of Eliel Saarinen, is hard, if not impossible, to tell. Saarinen, who designed everything he wanted people to live in and with, whose wife, Loja, was a superb textile designer, and who worked closely with the artists who adorned his buildings, notably Carl Milles, personified the Cranbrook idea. He was immensely popular with his students. He was jovial and gentle. He had a knack, an eagerness for bringing out the creativity in others. He discouraged academic imitation of his own style.

Eliel Saarinen came to America after he had won second prize in the famous Chicago Tribune competition. He was called to Ann Arbor to teach architecture at the University of Michigan. Henry Scripps Booth, a son of Cranbrook's sponsors, was one of his students. Before long, Saarinen was designing most of the Cranbrook Foundation buildings and engaging in searching discussions about the ideal art academy. He began to design its campus in 1925. Both George and Ellen Booth participated in every detail.

At times Saarinen would submit a sketch of which a Booth disapproved. "Go back and design something we will both like," the Booths would say. Saarinen always did.

Carl Milles arrived from Sweden in 1929 on Saarinen's invitation. He had known Oscar Wilde and Auguste Rodin in Paris, practiced many trades, including coffin making, and had, after much experimentation, settled on a sensual, animated style of sculpture—mostly of human figures—that is at once joyful and serene. He joined an intense group of artists who, under Saarinen's direction, created one of the most enchanted and enchanting settings in America.

Frank Lloyd Wright visited occasionally. Saarinen was one of the very few architects of his time whom Wright sincerely admired. Raymond M. Hood, the first winner of the Chicago Tribune competition, and designer of strikingly individualistic skyscrapers, was another frequent visitor. Carl Feiss tells me that there can be no doubt that Saarinen, via Hood, had an influence on the design of Rockefeller Center. Eliel Saarinen's own, most influential work was the First Christian Church at Columbus, Indiana, completed in 1942. It was the first starkly unadorned modern church in America.

The Cranbrook Academy buildings and gardens, however, can hardly be called unadorned or even modern in the bare and square sense. The campus seems part of the hills and meadows on which it is built. A monumental arcade serves mainly as backdrop for Milles's most sensual sculpture—nude life-size Nordic sprites splashing in a fountain.

The dormitories, faculty houses, museum, and workshop are earthy, rustic, direct and a delightful adventure of pathways, enclosed gardens, open malls and meadows and constant surprises. The place abounds, inside and out, with art and decoration—much of it whimsical, all of it lovable. Among the sculptors represented are Archipenko, Barlach, Maroti, Korbel, Rodin, and Aristide Maillol, to say nothing of Milles. There are beautiful wrought-iron work, handsome lamps and benches. In every hallway there are specially designed rugs and wall hangings, furniture, light fixtures, ceramics and woodwork. It all harmonizes in one visual symphony. Only the most recent pieces, defiant manifestations of our ego age, introduce a few jarring notes.

The symphonic idea faded rapidly when, following Saarinen, the painter Zoltan Sepeshy took over. The insistence on excellence and belief in a common faith began to fade. The Saarinen family dissolved. There was disruptive gossip of scandal. In the last two decades or so, one hardly heard of Cranbrook anymore. Today, like most other art schools in America, it is a place

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where inspiring teachers are the exception, where everyone does more or less his own thing, and where the ego is more important than art.

Roy Slade is a British-born painter who came to the attention of the art world as the popular and energetic director of the Corcoran School of Art in Washington, DC. Everyone was surprised, however, and some were dismayed, when, a few years ago, he was appointed director of the entire Corcoran Gallery, which was in dire straits. When Slade left for Cranbrook last year, everyone was dismayed. He got the Corcoran out of the doldrums. Creatively as well as administratively, he enhanced the Corcoran's standing.

Perhaps Roy Slade can do the same for Cranbrook. Perhaps he can give us a school of design that leads us out of the present post-Modern chaos.

Books Considered

Jerry Brown: The Man on the White Horse
by J.D. Lorenz
(Houghton Mifflin; $8.95)

Brown
by Orville Schell
(Random House; $10)

Jerry Brown: The Philosopher-Prince
by Robert Pack
(Stein and Day; $10)

A.D.A. News, March-April 1978
(Southern California A.D.A.)

Three new books on Jerry Brown tell us something about why the public has such difficulty forming judgments of politicians. Jerry Brown's politics emerge in only one of these books, J.D. Lorenz's. The other two are overconcerned with Brown's aura as a deep and mystical, unpredictable, paradoxical wonder boy. Robert Pack even anoints Jerry Brown a philosopher-prince, an unusual title for a man who, unlike the outmoded Platonic models, neither rules nor writes.

Luckily for his readers, Jim Lorenz has an earthly and palpable bone to pick with Jerry Brown, and he tells us most when he sticks to his story. Lorenz came into Brown's service as a successful poverty lawyer, a founder of California Rural Legal Assistance, where he fought and won battles with Ronald Reagan to pass on federal funds for the benefit of poor people. Lorenz thus made Brown an attractive appointment as head of the state employment department. Brown's campaign promises called for new jobs, and since California had a high unemployment rate and a revenue surplus which eventually grew to $5 billion, Lorenz happily set about the creation of the Jerry Brown employment program. But Lorenz soon learned that there was no popular pressure on Brown, and hence no commitment, to create jobs. Unemployment remained while one proposal after another was mysteriously eighty-sixed, and the governor drew rave reviews for his performance in a series of non-events.

One day, for instance, the employment department sponsors a luncheon for 250 local government officials from around the state. Governor Brown on entering is put off by a reporter asking if California will turn back its share of a federal jobs appropriation. "Just hitching up your saddles and going back to Washington won't do it," Brown snaps. "Money is money, that's all, just paper." He steps to the podium, presumably to give some indication of his plans and values. "Does anyone have any questions?" he begins. He pretends to leave. "State Manpower Planning Council," he reads sarcastically from the conference program. "What does that mean, anyway?" When someone tries to answer, he picks at the words. Lorenz comments:

> *The audience was out of its element. About half were black or Mexican-American . . . junior college graduates who had worked their way up.*

Brown gets himself off the hook by attacking the "grand schemes" of "Ph.D's and Harvard scholars." No one ever does find out what Brown himself believes in or intends to do. Later on, there is considerable coverage of Brown's spending a night in a run-down public housing project. But in the first 23 months of his administration, he fails to spend 67% of his allocated funds for job development.

Another time when Lorenz tries to talk to Brown about jobs, he finds the governor agitated. "The *Los Angeles Times* says I'm not doing anything. I'll show them. . . . we'll have a flurry of activity." Brown holds a press conference in Los Angeles with a union leader on one side and the president of the Sierra Club on the other. He announces a billion dollars worth of sewage projects. In the papers it looks like this: "Brown said by speeding up planned projects bogged down in bureaucracy, $1 billion can be pumped into the economy and 37,000 jobs created. . . ." Lorenz finds out the next day that a Supreme Court decision has released funds impounded by Nixon: California's share is the $1 billion Brown has taken credit for but which has nothing to do with him.

Brown is invited to speak before the California Welfare Directors Association. He stacks 34 volumes of federal and state welfare laws on a table, waves a copy of the Bible and declares, "If I have to take my pick, I take this thing against that mishmash any day." Another good picture for page one, but Jerry Brown does not go on to say anything about the problems of welfare.

Next Jerry Brown tries a little guerrilla theater at the university's Board of Regents. He interrupts the meeting to ask why reports and forms have as many pages as they do. He lectures administrators for having high salaries, noting that he's held down his own. None of this has anything to do with his educational policy, which is a continuation of the simple scapegoating and destruction of Ronald Reagan. Under Brown's father, the California higher education system was a model for the rest of the country. Now, due to

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massive budget cuts and faculty raises well below the cost of living, the system fights a holding action to keep its best teachers from going elsewhere and to maintain curricula.

Lorenz eventually sees that his boss's chief concern is his public prestige, and that job creation is connected with black people and therefore no political advantage. Brown wants "to tilt toward Mexican-Americans"—in fact, he worked hard to bring about a Farm Labor Board and fair union-elections among field workers. "Blacks," Brown says to Lorenz, "are the wrong symbol in the 1970s." Lorenz, in desperation, creates a drastically scaled-down jobs program, featuring self-help ideas he gleans on Brown's suggestion from *The Whole Earth Catalog*. To Lorenz the program is innocuous tokenism, but the *Oakland Tribune* gets hold of it and headlines it as "Brown's Secret Worker State," zeroing in on proposals for non-profit corporations and a state development bank. It turns out the leak probably came from Brown's office. At a memorable lunch, one of Brown's right hand men pressures Lorenz to resign quietly, then adds, in a classic of hang-loose California newspeak, "I love you."

Lorenz hangs tight, forces Brown to emerge from his circle of minions and fire him personally, but Lorenz never does stand up to Brown, not even in this book, for all its devastating detail. Lorenz's ambivalence tells a sad story about good people who are drawn into charismatic productions.

Unhappily, Jim Lorenz is hamstrung by his embarrassment at not being hip. Both in Sacramento and in writing this book he is torn by the difficulty of venting his outrage without appearing, or feeling, naive. What happens is that just when he is ready to stand up to Brown on a matter of principle, it occurs to him that Brown has an uncanny insight into the nature of our time—and that Brown's may be the only way to get and keep and use power.

As a result, Lorenz gets too cute and coy. His writing is marred by a tone of forced, cumbrous irony which undercuts the seriousness of his own response to social conditions. Whether praising Brown or patronizing him, Lorenz's irony just can't cope with the awe he feels at Brown's public relations. "He was a media master!" Lorenz exclaims at one point, seemingly hoping some sarcasm will come through, but all-too-fixated on what Brown is turning into. Perhaps he forgets that Jimmy Carter, too, was a "media master" in his day, and pseudo-hard-boiled cover stories were quickly assembled to celebrate his magical intuition of the popular will. In the long view, Jerry Brown will look more like Carter than unlike him. In the meantime, we don't need Lorenz's "archetypes" and "collective unconscious" to explain the hype.

If we can put aside his distracting mannerisms, Lorenz offers rich detail for an anatomy of the charismatic operation. At the center, there must be a stunted, driven and calculating personality—a man who is remarkably daring where others hesitate because he is freed from ordinary scruples. The leader must speak a moralistic language that gives vent to public resentment, while remaining casual and flexible enough "to move left and right at the same time," as Brown puts it. He must enmesh himself in a climate of constant crisis, so he alone can appear to save the day. He will then be surrounded by anxious acolytes eager to anticipate his whims and interpret his sayings. These helpers will fortify themselves by describing their leader as a child who needs their protection. They will cultivate anecdotes of times when he displayed in some crippled way a tender impulse. At the same time, master and minions will goad themselves to ever-nastier extremes of elitist behavior.

For me the telling symptom of government by charisma is cruelty, a quality which emerges from Lorenz's account of how the inner cadre of the Brown administration worked up a "yellow peril" fever over the air-lifting of Vietnamese refugees into the United States. The same quality appears when Jerry Brown puts down hot lunches: "Nobody ever gave me a school lunch." Or women: "More women should be in the home, taking care of their children." Cruelty breaks the surface again and again in the general snottiness that surrounds Brown:

> *Jerry and Bob just sat around on the tenth floor of the health department and talked philosophy and counted the number of memos that came in. . . Every so often, Bob said, they would send out a memo in order to see how long it took to receive a reply. They decided that since they couldn't do anything constructive with the bureaucracy, they might as well play with it.*

Brown, by Orville Schell, lacks coherence by the author's choice. Schell, an amiable observer who writes a fluid prose, chose to hang out with Jerry Brown and let his portrait tumble into place like a kaleidoscope. Yet now and then, as if to defeat even his own casual inconsistency, Schell throws in a purposive interview with Brown or with a friend or enemy. The statement Schell gets from Willie Brown on the nature of "professional politicians" is a little gem—because Willie Brown, unlike Jerry Brown or Orville Schell, has the inclination to think something through and say it directly. Schell, like Jerry Brown, has a way of touching on a serious subject without bothering to develop it. Each of them is content to relish his turns of phrase, letting the contradictions fall where they may, and together they give this book the atmosphere of a college bull session.

> *"You know," says Brown, as we pull back onto the highway, "I sort of respect the way the Chinese toe the line. That's real power—having so many people work together. We used to have this prescription in the Jesuits of 'Acting according to the gospels as if we were one.' We have our gospel, and they have their political lines." He reflects a moment on this. Then he asks, "Do the Chinese like to get philosophical in an eclectic way?"*

If Schell realizes how devastating this is, he gives no indication of it. He has a bond to Brown that may be greater than

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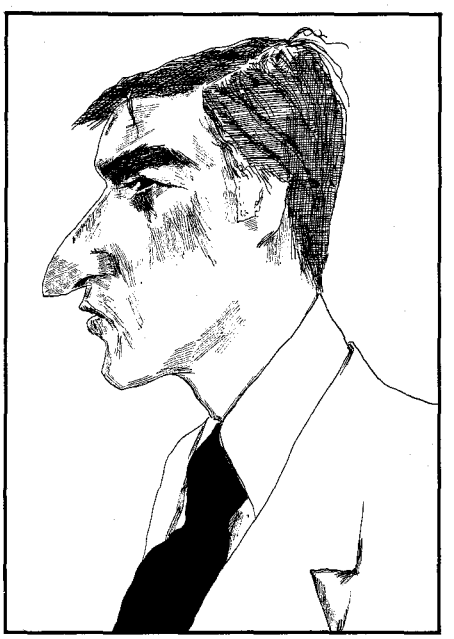
he knows or intends, a bond which seems to spoil even the higher levels of celebrity journalism. The problem is that the celebrity in even giving the writer his time is doing him a favor. If he acknowledges the writer in public, he tucks him inside the aura of his celebrity. The price of admission is to share the subject's own view of himself—and once that price is paid, to take another view later on would be an act of betrayal. This explains how certain aggrandizing male celebrities, usually in show business, manage to have every interview turn out exactly the same. And it explains why Orville Schell, for all the little particles of anti-Brown comment he scrupulously picks up here and there, ends up writing a campaign biography.

Schell's weakness is that he's just not interested in politics. He follows Brown's 1976 presidential campaign *New Yorker*-style, as if piling up the minutiae of observation were a substitute for knowledge. Schell sees Brown with the machine politicians in Maryland, but this to him is simply a paradox of Brown's personality, a chance for amusing verbal snapshots. From Robert Pack's book we learn that Brown outspent Carter two to one in primaries where both were entered, but Schell remains absorbed by the show at hand. The Democratic Convention, where Brown's behavior was both revealing and nationally important, seems too commonplace for Schell; he omits it entirely, choosing instead to interview the personnel in Brown's Sacramento mail room. The climax of Schell's book comes when he is invited along with Brown's quickie trip to Japan, where Brown tries to sell Japanese businessmen on the California image. By the end of the trip Schell is carrying Brown's bag, making Brown's calls and writing his thank-you notes, apparently feeling honored to do so.

My favorite episode in *Brown* occurs when our governor, after 3½ years of continuing Reagan's policy of neglect toward mental institutions, brings Schell along to visit one. The harried doctors tell Brown they are buried in paperwork and court appearances, outnumbered 200 to one by patients whom they lack facilities to treat, and pressured by judges sending in the criminally violent. Brown hits them with his "basic questions," challenges them by suggesting they give up. His parting words are, "What about R.D. Laing's ideas?" Later on he proposes a crash program to provide new funds, but—as Schell always fails to notice—they really are only token amounts.

Robert Pack digs into Brown's childhood, education and career—and comes up with nuggets from people who've known Brown from way back when. Pack's method is to alternate their



Jerry Brown by András Goldinger

comments pro and con, with little attempt at evaluation. In Pack as in the others, there are striking examples of Brown in action. Once more we see him at a press conference, this time announcing that California will loan 10 billion cubic feet of natural gas to Eastern states fighting a hard winter. But this is 1977, and reporters are getting wise. They catch on that Brown is referring to a prior decision by utility companies, a decision that has nothing to do with the state. Brown is angry at the reporters. He shifts gears, changes strategy.

At the end of that year we find Brown pushing a communications satellite for California, not, he says, because of the aerospace contracts, but because "the exploration of space is inevitable, and everything reaches out for that—tall buildings, airplanes, rockets—so why not be a part of it?"

And we close the last of the three big Brown books with only a fragmentary sense of Brown's politics or commitments. For the hard facts of Brown's record, it is necessary to turn to a little pamphlet put out by the Southern California chapter of the Americans for Democratic Action. Now few of us will go all the way with the ADA . . . but imagine what it takes for them to repudiate a liberal Democratic governor. Their position is based on an examination of Brown's actions in the areas of crime, taxes, the environment, urban policy, employment, education and health care. On all these issues, though Brown is ready enough to take credit for liberal accomplishments, the ADA finds that in practice he has "out-Reaganed Reagan." This they document with his activities on one piece of legislation after another.

It would be unfair to suggest that Brown's attacks on the bureaucracy are without merit or conviction, or that they have not led to some imaginative and effective appointments. A few of Brown's token showcase programs, such as the Conservation Corps, are based on good ideas. The trouble is—and this is why the ADA is finally right about him—most of these actions are insignificant when compared with the impact of his "fiscal conservatism." No matter how you slice it, fiscal conservatism in the larger areas of human need leads to greater inequity, unemployment and social meanness. By "social meanness" I refer to the old American attitude that the more fortunate have to punish the less fortunate if they are to hang on to what they've got—and that a society based on every man for himself is the inviolate expression of the American Dream.

Of course a governor, or anyone in power in this country, is under enormous pressure to protect and preserve corporate interests—and to extend the socialistic subsidies which they alone enjoy. If this is so for Brown, let him say it. Then his fiscal conservatism would at least be what it seems. But he can't have his cake and eat it too by pretending it's a tool of more humane social arrangements. Such arrangements will not come from fragments of half-baked "eclectic philosophy"—or from attacks on medium-salaried public employees. They can come only from political organization for a fairer and more fulfilling social structure.

Jerry Brown is not offering to lead that kind of effort, and perhaps in these times he cannot be blamed for that. He is instead exploiting a widespread feeling that nothing can be done, that government is a shuck at the expense of the taxpayers. The other side of this coin is a nihilistic acceptance of the notion that politics is a show and the best politician is the coolest entertainer. And so we have a politician who plays up his perversities, and commentators who look on with fascination at his success—as if they were watching a movie.

In these times the price for running against government and politics goes up as quickly as inflation. California is now

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paying the first installment through the Jarvis-Gann Initiative, a victorious state referendum to slice property taxes $7 billion per year, two-thirds of which will remain in the pockets of industry and landlords, and the lack of which will require drastic cuts in local services, including fire, police, libraries and an estimated 60 percent loss in school revenues. The majority voted for it in the belief that they were striking a blow against government interference in their pursuit of happiness. The result will be that the rich get richer and the rest miss out on a good many amenities of civilization. The worst of the bureaucracy will not be affected. The overall tax structure will become even more unfair. And several hundred thousand will lose their jobs.

Jerry Brown was against Jarvis-Gann, for the same reasons that any governor would have to be against it. Not only would it make the governor look punitive and harsh, it seemed at first like another crackpot scheme which didn't have a chance. When it became evident that the referendum would pass, Jerry Brown stopped working against it and announced he was studying drastic budget cuts. Ironically, his early opposition may cause him to lose his office to a man who lacks even Brown's surface interest in more decent social incentives. In the aftermath of the Proposition 13 victory, Evelle Younger accuses Brown of being "out of step with the people."

Brown created a new style of attacking government; for a time he was the George Wallace of the West. Then he guessed wrong, and may be perceived as a hypocrite for not spurring hard enough toward the apocalypse. Can he handle what he started? Or is that just another intriguing paradox?

Jeremy Larner

Jeremy Larner is author of the movie "The Candidate," and of *Nobody Knows: Reflections on the McCarthy Campaign of 1968* (Macmillan).

Mencken: A Study of His Thought by Charles A. Fecher

(Knopf; $15)

Students in colleges and universities and pupils in the secondary schools are solemnly taught that all books and writers should be classified into categories which (though the two could not read or write) seemed to begin with Adam and Eve. Top-hole is allotted to something called the epic; place number two goes to poetry, commonly divided into narrative, lyric, and dramatic. Confusion shortly enters, however, because another major place must be made for tragedy and comedy. Fluttering about the totem pole but never assigned a fixed place is "literary criticism"; and various minor genres hover around the lower rungs of the theoretical ladder. Perhaps in the days of Aristotle all this made sense. Since the humanities descend from the Greeks and the Latins, this organization still dominates our classrooms.

One is of course not expected to remember much from his humanistic instruction, but the faculty and other solemn-minded readers cling to the myth that criticism not only still plays an important part in literary evaluation, but that the names and presumably the words of many critics are as familiar as those of Shakespeare. Indeed, no national literature is thought to be mature until it has produced one or more leading critics; and important distinctions are made between book reviewers, and writers who either enunciate a transcendental philosophy of writing or tell us what we ought to read and why.

That an enormous distance separates theory from fact can be quickly shown. Let the reader take a blank piece of paper and write these names down in order: Joseph Dennie, Nathaniel Parker Willis, William Cullen Bryant, William Gilmore Simms, James Russell Lowell, Edmund Clarence Stedman, Irving Babbitt, Stuart Pratt Sherman, Paul Elmer More, Norman Foerster, and William Crary Brownell. I omit Edgar Allan Poe for two reasons: the reader may in his memory confuse a tale or poem by Poe with a work of criticism; and Poe's two essays on writing short stories have been so pillaged or parodied by textbook publishers, they are not now recognized as his. Let him now set down by each name two titles of critical books any of these persons has published and then say honestly whether he has voluntarily read any of this prose since he graduated from college.

In literary histories Henry L. Mencken is commonly classified as a critic. Aside from his masterly *The American Language*, a contribution in the stricter sense to philology that one consults as one consults a dictionary, what does the reader know nowadays of the library produced by the once famous Sage of Hollins Street? You can, if you have to, get through one of the collections called *Prejudices*, but the books he discusses and the authors he condemns ring hollowly nowadays. There is no trace of Mencken's having read Henry James, little or any reading of Howells, no trace of having either looked into or understood Robert Frost, no vestige of Marianne Moore or E.A. Robinson or Wallace Stevens; and the "critic's" enthusiasm, if it be that, is mainly for debunking history, fiction and biography.

If the reader is familiar with American politics and politicians since Teddy Roosevelt, he can get a good deal of an objurgative kind out of Mencken's opinions of statesmen and the political scene. Woodrow Wilson was "the perfect model of the Christian cad." Harding's political platform resembled "words scrawled on a wall by feeble-minded children." The Brain Trust of FDR was made up "exclusively of quacks." These are not the judgments of history, but they are at least judgments of a sort. In a republic founded by Anglo-Saxons, "a mongrel and inferior people . . . incapable of any spiritual elevation above that of second-rate English colonials," who "seek refuge inevitably in the one sort of superiority that the lower caste [note the noun] of men can

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authentically boast, to wit, superiority in docility, in credulity, in resignation, in morals."

Mencken regarded himself in a fashion as a philosopher, one who had little or no use for Christianity or any system of secular thought with the possible exception of that of Nietzsche. He wrote three books tending to explicate a philosophical point of view, two of them good, the third indifferent. The two good ones are *A Treatise on the Gods* (1930), devoted to a proposition as old as Lucretius that religion was invented by man; and *Treatise on Right and Wrong* (1934), which sets up a "private" "code of honor," or so at least that is what the preface seems to say. A solipsistic code of honor is something of a contradiction in terms. The third of the trilogy is *Notes on Democracy* (that this is the book is my best guess), but it is not one of his brighter volumes. If Mencken is to be thought of as a literary critic, Mr. Fecher is at fault in not getting to this aspect of his work until Chapter IV in a book only six chapters long, but I do not think he is wrong. Mencken was on the whole incapable of purely esthetic judgment, yet in matters of public moment like general thought ("philosophy") and politics and such books as have to do with public taste and interest (his "Chapter IV"), Mr. Fecher seems to have arranged his matter in quite the proper order. He is dealing with a commentator, not with an "artist." And as a commentator on the American scene Mencken has few predecessors and no equals.

H.L. Mencken — Courtesy of The Bettmann Archive

Concentrating on Mencken as an intellectual force, Mr Fecher has cut his material to the bone, and in condensing it has even omitted that wonderful piece of legal buffoonery when Mencken sold a copy of *The American Mercury* containing Herbert Asbury's "Hatrack," in order that Mencken could be sued for peddling pornography in the Athens of America. By omitting a thousand and one legends, he has pictured Mencken as a unified intellectual force, and given the essentiality of his philosophy. This is all to the good. But it carries with it the defects of its virtue. It approaches the single-source fallacy. The entire Western world: political, economic, esthetic, religious, military, scientific was in a disturbed state, and Mencken was merely leading the American division of iconoclasm. *The Smart Set*, sold to John Adams Thayer and edited in its best years by Mencken and George Jean Nathan, stood for "sophistication" and therefore could not be sold in some cities and states; and the neo-humanists—Babbitt, More, Sherman, Foerster, and their kind—put up a vigorous and intelligent resistance. *The Jungle* was published in 1906. *The New Republic* was launched in 1914. The Boston police struck in 1919, the year that saw the 18th Amendment adopted and the Senate rejection of the Treaty of Versailles. *The Goose Step* appeared in 1923. What had *The American Mercury* to do

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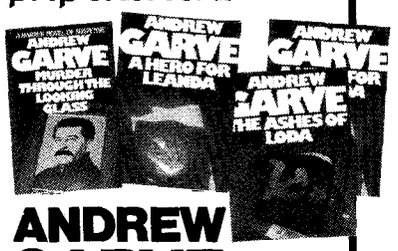

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with the Bonus Army march of 1932 on Washington?

Well, it had everything to do with it. Mencken wrote in a new language called American English that American idealism of the D.A.R. sort was dead as the dodo. The great glory of Mencken is that he struck out for liberty. What he never understood was that liberty had laws. Like his contemporary Lincoln Steffens, he thought that if one could only destroy evil, good would automatically take its place. It hasn't.

Howard Mumford Jones

Howard Mumford Jones won a Pulitzer Prize in 1964 for *O Strange New World.*

Zip:
A Novel of the Left and the Right
by Max Apple
(Viking; $8.95)

Max Apple has real comic talent. He has an eye for incongruity and an ear for intonation; his collection of short stories, *The Oranging of America,* proved him a social satirist with charm. *Zip: A Novel of the Left and the Right* is about politics and prize-fighting, and there's fancy footwork throughout. Though there's a slightly cloying coyness to the title's double entendre, Apple by and large avoids cheap shots. His books are better than their names.

The cast of characters teeters once again between the imagined and the actual. We have Ira Goldstein managing a middleweight called Jesus the Crab; the first-person narration, in both present and past tenses, is Ira's memoir. Jesus Sanchez becomes the adopted son of a Puerto Rican organizer named Martinez; eight years later, as Crab, he becomes a member of the Goldstein tribe. Ira first sees "zip" in him when Jesus lays out Moses Robinson "with clean and effortless punches like a television policeman." And a series of situation comedies ensues.

There are plots abounding. While Ira plans seduction and mounts an assault on the middleweight crown, his shadow-boxing secret sharer plots a coup. Though Jesus does road-work incessantly, he's no running dog; licking the spittle from his mouthpiece, later, he's no capitalist lickspittle lackey but the unchained proletarian champ. The two protagonists have camaraderie but scant comradeship; Jesus writes from Russia, of his erstwhile manager, that Ira was "the tool of the FBI and the CIA, and the Judas Iscariot of the Antiwar Movement."

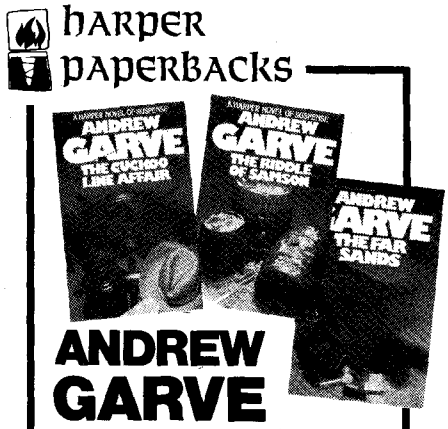
Ira is surrounded by women. His widowed mother, Frieda, offers herself as collateral in order to bankroll his hopes. ("An engraved robe can run $200, regulation boxing gloves are $85, mouthpieces $12.50 each. . . . Yes, the second law of thermodynamics rules the cosmos, but money rules the ring.") She floats a loan with Solomon, Detroit's scrap-metal king; by book's end they are married and chauffeur-driven, and childhood wrongs have been righted. Grandmother Goldstein—who thwarted their romance long since—dies brokenhearted; Solomon's not good enough, though a millionaire.

Ira's own version of the Jewish Princess is Debby Silver, busy with radical causes, good grades and a waterbed; his dreams swarm with *shiksas* and *schwarzers,* but it is Debby who provides him bounce and "zip." His one previous experience came with a girl who thought they'd not survive the Cuban Missile Crisis and wanted to try out fellatio first. "From Sharon Shapiro I have learned that at the world's end people dabble still in idle curiosity. Socrates, at the end, said he owed someone a chicken. . . ."

This pretty much sets the book's tone. But as Ira and Jesus go public, so do the characters. Jane Fonda appears in Jesus's dressing room before his first big fight. She knees him in the groin; he's wearing a protective cup, however, and goes out to kidnap J. Edgar Hoover, and they fly him to Castro's Havana, where Hoover ends up in a chair suspended over the boxing ring—a fight-fan to the end—watching Tiger Williams demolish the crowd-pleasing ideologue while Grandmother Goldstein is dying back home, and LBJ invites the Solomons down to the ranch for ribs. Got that? This book winds up, folks, it doesn't run down, it's a regular slambang fantasia, replete with Howard Cosell and George Danton the trainer and Caluccio Salutatti, who should have been merely the Mafia but is, more dangerously, a Marxist, and Tom Hayden and baby and bathwater. Consider the rhetoric's dizzying range. Jesus, says Ira:

> *". . . is a block of marble and Tiger Williams some petty Michelangelo chipping away at him. Jesus will fall, but only in geologic time, when the arena withers to sandstone and the great grandchildren of Tiger Williams huddle in the cities of the twenty-second century . . . Grandma, what is he proving now? Your schwarzer-Puerto Rican-orphan-communist-assman—what is he proving to anyone, and why is he holding his young life in the air as exposed as your poor bald head against the hospital pillow? The mouthpiece is gone and his teeth are all over the ring."*

In a book so full of "low comedy," however, where should "high seriousness" reside? Character after character takes the world seriously, while their author takes it with a fistful of salt. And this produces the kind of



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vertigo instanced above; Grandmother Goldstein's vengeful integrity seems wrong-headed, mostly, and Jesus's deeply held convictions fail to convince. Apple is most effective when he goes for the sidelong effect. Crab—imitating Babe Ruth—points to the spot on the ropes where he'll knock out his opponent, and Solomon the scrap-metal king is a grandstander of the first rank. But it's hard to know what this novel's about, or who's knocking whom for a loop. Ira's lengthy fantasies are less incisive than his brief fantastical encounters; a three-page dream about "the Purple Gang," for instance, falls flat.

And the figures descend from prototype to stereotype; the women, in particular, have too few distinguishing marks. The courtship of Solomon and Frieda reads like warmed-over Bruce Jay Friedman, and the grandmother's complaints begin to bore. The book, though brief, feels windy by comparison with *The Oranging of America*'s shapely succinctness. Apple used the prizefight metaphor to as good advantage in his short story, "Inside Norman Mailer," and the brilliant "Understanding Alvarado" did better by Castro and Cuba. The novel ends in a great burst of speed, but—to borrow the diction once more—it's as if he saved himself for the 15th round.

Still there's magic here. From the Goldstein's cellar in Detroit to the fight of the century in Havana—with J. Edgar Hoover as stakes—is a zany distance to travel, and Apple's a good-humored guide. His plot is absurd but admittedly so; his prose is sprightly throughout. There are no villains in this comic cosmos; even Tiger Williams, who batters Jesus senseless, is "tired and in tears." The dialogue is excellent, and the closing sequence—an apotheosis of Jesus ascending—proves a *tour de force* as farce. Apple's imagination is fecund; if the book leaves the aftertaste of cotton candy, it's nonetheless been a well-spun sweet read. Take it with you to the beach and watch out for Jesus the Crab.

Nicholas Delbanco

Nicholas Delbanco's new novel, *Spring and Fall*, will be published by William Morrow in March.

Experiencing Science
by Jeremy Bernstein

(Basic Books; $12.95)

In 1959 Jeremy Bernstein, a 30-year-old physicist at the Brookhaven National Laboratory, sent to *The New Yorker* a "letter" about teaching physics on Corsica. It took William Shawn a while to notify Bernstein of his magazine's acceptance—but ever since, Bernstein has been *The New Yorker*'s expert on science and scientists. Over the years he has reviewed the science-related books; he has also published a considerable number of profiles on modern scientists.

He collected a batch of 16 profiles and reviews in *A Comprehensible World, On Modern Science and Its Origins* (1967). Although written over eight years, many of the articles have a "natural" relationship with each other, especially the pieces on Einstein and Niels Bohr, Erwin Schrodinger, T.D. Lee and C.N. Yang (Nobel Prize winners for work on nuclear parity), and the European Council for Nuclear Research (CERN). *Experiencing Science* is the second collection. It brings together eight pieces: three profiles (I.I. Rabi, Lewis Thomas, and Arthur Clarke), two essays (Kepler and self-replicating calculators), two book reviews, and a "strange, fictional love story" involving Gödel's Theorem.

Bernstein has evidently worried over the individual pieces working together as a book: within five or six sentences of each other, he writes of his belief that the reader will find, "taken together, these writings done at various times and places and with different aims and goals in mind, have a certain relatedness and internal consistency"; also, "I hope the reader will feel as I do and that this is not simply a collection of random and unrelated articles." There was good reason to worry.

He has tried imposing some order by distributing the articles into three sections. The essay on Kepler and the profile of Rabi form "Two Faces of Physics"; the profile of Lewis Thomas (head of Sloan Kettering and author of *Lives of a Cell*) and the two book reviews, on Soviet biologist Lysenko and Rosalind Franklin, form "Three Faces of Biology"; the profile of Arthur Clarke, collaborator with Stanley Kubrick of *2001*, and the essay on calculators and the strange fiction form "Fact and Fantasy." Despite the brief paragraphs preceding each section, the groupings are artificial, based more on surface resemblances of subject matter than a deeper probing of thematic relationships.

If Bernstein had worked thematically, he might have grouped them differently—he might also have had to rewrite or reshape them. For example, he might have considered the implications of competition among scientists and thus related his straightening out of Rosalind Franklin's role in Watson and Crick's search for the double-helical structure of DNA with Rabi's comment (which is not picked up on) that his concern for doing physics "with a certain style" went out the window when he "was up against intense competition." Or rather than summarizing Medvedev's book on Lysenko and easily attacking the latter as "a fanatic, illiterate charlatan" he might have examined the more subtle interactions of the scientist's relation to the state—Rabi, who was associate director of the Radiation Laboratory at M.I.T. during the war, a trouble-shooter for Oppenheimer during the Atomic Bomb development at Los Alamos, and chairman of the General Advisory Commission of the AEC from 1952 to 1956, gave him plenty of opportunity to do so. Or rather than simply noting in the introductory paragraph that Kepler was a "Protestant mystic" and Rabi "profoundly Jewish" he might have gone more deeply into Rabi's wonderful feeling for the "mystery" and "sacredness" of physics with his contention that the humanities are not "truly universal," that "the proper study of mankind is *science*, which also means that the proper study of mankind is man."

With the doggedly chronological pace of the profile Bernstein doesn't usually pick up on provocative statements by his subjects. Arthur Clarke, successful science-fiction writer, the conceiver in 1945 of communications satellites, comes off as a carefree happy-go-lucky fellow. He works in his "ego room," a kind of "living museum of Clarke memorabilia."

Clarke told me that when the ego chamber is fully decorated, the walls will reflect a luminous white ray of pure and undiluted ego—a ray of such intensity that any transient

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droplet of self-doubt that happens by will be consumed as if by a laser beam.

That's wonderful. But what of this "self doubt"? The next sentence begins, "At seven-twenty, Clarke [he lives in Ceylon] tunes in to the BBC shortwave reading of editorials from the British dailies . . . ."

The strolling and relaxed tempo of the profiles accommodates capsule biographies of people or institutions important to the subject; it accommodates as well a good number of technical definitions, e.g., Bohr orbits, molecular beams, space quantization, nuclear spins, protoplasts, endotoxins, mycoplasmas. And this, after all, is why William Shawn—and readers of *The New Yorker*—have valued Bernstein: he can take on complex subjects and make them intelligible. Still, *Experiencing Science* is not a history of science and as readers, we want to know something of the dynamics between the subjects and their work. Bernstein's congeniality is sometimes so respectful that it gets in the way. The critical attitude that he brings to Lysenko and the assertiveness of his opinions on Rosalind Franklin are wholly missing from the profiles—it's as if we have a different man. Thus Rabi comes out to be a rather fatherly, benign gentleman. And he may well be—although there is another dimension of the man in the recently published diaries of George B. Kistiakowsky (*A Scientist at the White House*, 1976), special assistant for science and technology to President Eisenhower from 1959 to 1960. An entry from January 1960:

> *I learned to my surprise, that this whole business of the neutron generating machine and letters by physicists to AEC urging its construction in preference to the Stanford accelerator, is a maneuver by Rabi, who is opposed to more high-energy machines in principle, and so has tried to block the Stanford accelerator. What a bastard! He took me in! Panofsky said that Serber, Lee [professors of physics at Columbia], and others . . . feel that they have been had by Rabi.*

Experiencing Science should have been a considerably better book—the evidence of the first collection says so; so does the author's thoughtfulness and intelligence. However, it would have meant as much work as the original articles required; and why do it if you don't have to.

Merrill Leffler

Merrill Leffler is founding editor and publisher of *Dryad*, a literary journal.

Reconsideration

Thomas More

Apart from his martyr's end on the executioner's block in 1535 for what his outraged sovereign called treason, Thomas More's fame rests upon a pithy little work he wrote when he was 38. The freshness of *Utopia*, its rich substance and piquant style, have not been abraded by more than four centuries of imitation and misapplication, the muck of scholarly analysis, and even the ministrations of Roland Barthes's semiology. More the author of a witty book and More the saint (as of the year 1935) have traveled their separate ways through history. Half a millennium after his birth in 1478, it is perhaps time they met again, not to be reconciled but to be confronted anew in all their tragic contradiction.

I do not pretend to solve the enigma of Thomas More, the worldly humanist and skillful lawyer who willed to embrace death, but rather hope to illuminate the polarities and ambivalences of his character. If this detracts somewhat from his saintliness, it may add to his humanity. In a daydream More once fancied himself as King Utopus marching along crowned with a diadem of wheat, very striking in a Franciscan frock, carrying a handful of wheat as his sacred scepter. To the costume of this royal saint I have to add a discipline and a knotted hairshirt, and a copy of the *Utopia* itself.

The deft combination of moods in More's *Utopia* has never been reproduced. In this sense it has had no progeny, only epigoni. When utopia became entirely serious, an important shift occurred in European consciousness. There is something as fundamentally paradoxical about the utopian tradition that derived from Thomas More as there is about the man himself. The *Utopia* was the offspring of a nostalgia for what in the early 16th century was conceived to be the spirit of ancient Greece and for what evangelicals believed to be the moral truths of apostolic Christianity; yet the later utopian passion for happiness in this world was a potent force in wiping out both these traditions. The temper of the original Christian humanist utopia in More, as in Erasmus and Rabelais, was gay, playful, tolerant, skeptical, amusing in varying degrees; by the 17th century the utopian tradition that stemmed from it became grave, absolutist, self-righteous, assured of its truth, apocalyptic, vehement. That More's *Utopia* was later read in the spirit of deadly earnest by reformers and revolutionaries is perhaps the dialectical destiny of many great works. The utopia of Christian humanism could still ridicule itself as well as the miserable real world in which the colloquy took place. In later utopias there are no jokes worth telling, no absurd scenes to narrate.

After staring at the Holbein painting of More dated 1527, asking whether this is the head of a martyr or of the author of *Utopia*, one recalls the plain chronological fact that the book had been written some 12 years before, and may have incorporated notes that went as far back as a conversation with Erasmus in 1509. The neck around which More wears the gold chain that was a mark of shame in Utopia is closer to the chopping-block, indeed only eight

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Sir Thomas More (1527) by Hans Holbein The Younger

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years away. An x-ray of the picture has revealed a face that Holbein reworked in many areas and that resembles even less a humanist scholar mildly amused by the foibles of the world than does the austere and haunted visage of the final, official portrait (now hanging in the Frick Collection in New York).

It is difficult to recognize the author of the elegant *Utopia* in this picture of a man of 50 about to become Chancellor of England, who had recently written violent polemics in defense of the King's theology against the "insane calumnies of Luther" and who would continue to denounce in book after book the "heretyques of oure tyme that go busyle aboute to heape uppe to the skye theyr

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foule, fylthye dunghyll of all olde and newe false, stynckyng heresyes, gathered uppe together againste the trewe catholike faithe of Christ."

Shortly after the *Utopia* was published in 1516, the schism in the Church had become open, and the whole intellectual world was turned upside down, but in ways very different from the reforms of King Utopus. By 1520, fanciful innovations ceased to be laughing matters. The playful days were over; one did not toy with utopias while Christendom was being torn asunder. The purported demands for community of property by Thomas Müntzer and other Protestant leaders of the Peasant Wars of 1525, who were said to quote *Utopia* in a German translation, revolted and alarmed Thomas More. The marriage of nuns and priests and wild tales of Hussite sexual license disgusted him. Once the "pestylent errours" and "pernyciouse heresyes" had infested the Continent, More regretted much that he and his friend Erasmus had written. There was a tinge of remorse that he had devoted time to levities that were misunderstood, and in an epitaph that he composed for himself during a period of illness he dismissed his lighter writings with the terse remark: "He engaged to some extent in literary matters." More always recognized degrees of evil, as his Utopians appreciated degrees of pleasure, and the evils he had deplored in 1516 occupied a less significant place in his order of vices 15 years later. It was the heretical books, "growen so faste and sprongen uppe so thykke," that had killed more souls than the famine of lean years had killed bodies, and he attacked them with the vigor he had employed in the *Utopia* to denounce social and economic injustices.

More turned to writing a long succession of theological diatribes in English against the heretical enemies of the Catholic Church. The vehemence of his attacks on Tyndale and Luther is worlds away from the graceful style and manner of *Utopia*. To keep his readers from nodding he was not above resorting to the scatological turns of phrase in which Luther excelled, or making oblique references to the hot sexual passion aroused by fair devils. The images he used were those of ordinary speech, the examples came from his wide experience in the lawcourts. With blunt coarseness he described Luther as a *cacadaemon* and invented a whole string of variations on the verb *cacare*. Tyndale was denounced as "a bolde beste and a shameless whoremaster" and his writing as a "poysened stynkynge tayle of some stynkynge serpent."

If sentiments voiced in *Utopia* are taken as humanist ideals that More could at least wish for, and are set by side of reflections in the *Apology* or the *Dialogue of Comfort* (1534), his very late works, it is difficult to hold to the thesis of his marvelous consistency that some modern expositors have propounded. But why should the moral utterances of a man of 38 displaying his ingenuity in friendly rivalry with fellow humanists match the solemn reflections of that same man approaching death 20 years later, after catastrophic revolutions in Christendom and in the constitution of the kingdom he had served? The seasons change and so does the man. While in *Utopia* economic equality is the fundamental law, in the *Dialogue of Comfort* More's venerable spokesman Anthonye advances the threadbare arguments that if all property were divided equally nobody would be much better off than a beggar, and if a society was to function one man had to give work to many. Obviously, this does not square with the passionate defense of equality in all things made by Raphael Hythloday, the protagonist in *Utopia*, or with the description of its salutary moral consequences. While honest, allowable pleasures are the norm of Utopian life, the *Dialogue of Comfort* merely allows a man "to take now & than some honest worldly myrth." More writes: "I dare not be so sore as utterly to forbyd yt, syth good men & well lernid have in some case alowid it, specyally for the diversitie of divers mens myndes." Thus, what has been the general spirit in *Utopia* is in the *Dialogue* a rare and stinted concession.

That life was a prison, an antechamber to death, was a Platonic and Christian image constantly renewed in More's writings. But what was a sentiment among other Christian feelings couched in the late medieval language of piety was often so intense that it broke the bounds of a layman's religion. Toward the end, remembrance of death possessed More completely. Since the world was a prison, what mattered it whether one slept in a palatial chamber or in a tiny cubicle? For men awaiting Judgment Day, worldly affairs should be indifferent as they trembled for the salvation of their souls, and More fervently prayed in the Tower that he might "abstayn from vayne confabulations" and "estchew light folysh myrth and gladnesse." At the time of the *Utopia* he may have sincerely believed that distributive justice in the world was of pressing consequence to a Christian. Not by any stretch of the imagination can this be said of his later writings.

More himself told of his rage against the heretics. His epitaph gloried in his achievements as castigator of heretics, thieves, and murderers, who were regularly executed during his incumbency as Lord Chancellor. Yet Hythloday had known no heretics in Utopia and had pitied the poverty-driven English thieves. If More's son-in-law Roper never heard him utter a word in anger, as he maintained in his biography, English heretics who suffered his taunts before their martyrdom might have borne witness to another side of his nature. He was a bitter partisan who excoriated his opponents as idolaters more offensive to God than those who exalted "Beel, and Baal, and Belzabub, and all the devyls in hell."

While changes in More's social and religious outlook readily find an explanation in the revolution of objective realities, his emotional tone invites a deeper inquiry. Only a psychology that is undaunted by polarities and ambivalences and contrarieties and paradoxes can presume to make some sense of Thomas More without decapitating him psychically as the executioner did physically.

For all his beguiling humor, More was always obsessed with death. Letters he wrote in his twenties tell of his suffering periods of black despair. To John Colet, his spiritual counselor, he described his utter contempt for the world's passions and ambitions, and fear of falling into grim despondency, "almost the very gates of hell." Man was born into a vale of tears and life was a search for salvation, communion with God, liberation of the soul from the prison of the body. Though active in the lawcourts and in the King's service—he was a master of requests, an ambassador, an under-treasurer of the Exchequer, a Lord Chancellor of England—from early youth More longed for a Christian *vita contemplativa* and emancipation from the business of the marketplace, sometimes from life itself. Among the poems he wrote as a young man was the couplet: "The head that lay easily and full soft, Instede of pylows lyeth after on the blocke." At the time of Henry VIII's greatest favor toward him, More observed to Roper that the King would unhesitatingly part with his learned Chancellor's head to win a castle in France. On another occasion he exclaimed to Roper that if only Christendom

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could be united again he would gladly have himself thrown into the Thames in a sack, a vision of self-immolation inspired by the passion of Christ; he would die that the world might be saved. And in his English works death was a recurrent theme. The common Christian need to reflect on death had more than a formal character in his writings.

The salvation of man's soul through penitential exercises to crush the lusts of the flesh was one Christian way, and More had worn a hairshirt till the blood flowed onto his clothes. Penance had a broad meaning for him, related to the need to inflict pain upon himself as a religious duty. It was a punitive revenging of his sins upon himself, a payment for sin through sacrifice, for he owed some immense debt beyond redemption. As Anthonye told his beloved Vyncente in the *Dialogue of Comfort,* "the less affliccion that he felith in his sowle, the more payne in recompence let hym put uppon his body, & pourge the spirite by the affliccion of the flesh."

More's gloomy inner recesses and his urbane, attractive facade were always present together, though at different periods in life either the penitential or the jocular side of his nature was more in evidence in books, in the family circle, in public behavior. The hairshirt, the self-flagellation with knotted ropes, the vigils, and the fasts were there, even when his dark view of man's journey on earth was covered with a cheerful demeanor and a jesting way of speech that served to hide his inner torment. For many years anxiety was drowned in constant activity in the lawcourts, taking care of the king's business, following the royal household from manor to manor, robbing himself of a few hours of sleep to study and write. As time passed and cataclysms broke over Christendom, with ugly manifestations in England from which More could not extricate himself, his penitential passion became stronger and the uses of this world ever staler to him. But even in the last dialogue written in prison, even on the scaffold, the joking masque was not completely dropped. Only in the manuscript notes of his prison psalter has the balance been upset, as he writes in the margin over and over again *demones, demones, demones.*

Reviewing his whole life, the beginning that prefigures the end and the end that clarifies the beginning, one might say that More's deep melancholy bespoke aggression turned inward, while his wit, which could be bitter and scratchy, was a sign of aggression turned outward, a protective device against the mortal danger of a violence directed entirely against the self. The ferocious sarcasm of his polemics against the heretics was an outlet for the angry passion that was consuming him. More's final willing of death was a surrender to the cup of temptation that had been close to his lips throughout his adult years; and he celebrated the event in character, with a quip to the executioner.

Of the many brilliant attempts to define laughter, wit, and humor in man's psychic economy, the distinction between wit and humor that has been essayed by Jean-Paul Richter and by Sigmund Freud may give us a window into the troubled breast of Thomas More. There is a wit that can be barbed and cruel, that vents its aggressive energy against a person or thing, and there is a humor that is a triumph, a transcendent exercise that liberates its possessor by separating him from his interests and anxieties, diminishing them through distance, making them childish, unreal, a fitting subject of merriment. Both wit and humor were Thomas More's guardian angels, intervening at the gravest and most critical junctures in his life.

More's wit and satire were meant to correct, chastise, wound. His aggression ran the gamut from tame to carnivorous. In the *Utopia,* when he was animated by a desire to reform institutions, not turn his back on them as worldly matters unworthy of his concern, he ridiculed diplomatic pomp by decking out an ambassador in the gold that Utopians used for chamberpots; and he derided the English judicial system with savage attacks delivered through the mouth of the wild prophet Hythloday. The wit could assume a teasing character. More loved to confound literalists, many of whose present-day heirs have turned his jokes into history and political theory. At other times satiric jibes were weapons of theological warfare intended to degrade and demean enemies. In the final period of his contest with Henry VIII, the witticisms assumed the nature of a reckless play with instruments of violence that could ricochet against More himself. As his opposition to the King hardened and it became clearer that he could maintain the purity of his Christian conscience only at the price of open defiance, he challenged and demeaned the royal will. Declining the bishops' invitation that he accompany them to the coronation of Anne Boleyn, he warned them about the impending loss of their virtue through the seemingly innocuous act of their attendance. More entertained his clerical visitors with the tale of a criminal maiden, immune to punishment because of reverence for virginity in the mythical kingdom where she dwelt, until a royal councillor proposed: "Let her first be defloured, then after may she be devoured." Knowing full well that his words would be reported, More added: "Now, my lordes, it lieth not in my powre but that they may devoure me; but, by godes holie grace, I will provide they shall never defloure me." The lecherous King who had deflowered so many others would not have him. This punning, rhyming wit was a fiery instrument that seared its victims.

But it was humor rather than aggressive wit that in the last days came to More's aid and helped him face death, jests that placed him outside the reach of his own circumstances and made him invulnerable. With gallows humor he was able to annihilate reality. In his ultimate moments he found solace in deflating the dreadful solemnity of a public execution, though it was his own. As he ascended the stairs to the scaffold, he appealed to an officer: "Help me up with your hand, for as for my comming doone, let me shift as I may, for by then I ame sure I shall take no greate harme." It is easy to discover in later utopians of stature ambiguities and aggressive violence akin to Thomas More's. There are martyrs among them. But none to my knowledge achieved his transcendent humor.

The quips and puns More directed at himself and others now give delight as a mild release of our own desire to hurt, but the physical penitential reality of More's personal existence is so strange and brutal one begins to suspect that self-destructive drives are in operation beneath the affable exterior. Preoccupation with death may be dismissed as a common experience of 16th-century man, or of everyman. The terrors of purgatory and hell loomed large in

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More's time. But if all men were absorbed with death, its pangs were not equally intense, and the unconscious mechanisms More used to combat the death-wish were not always available to others. The gifts of wit and humor are not universal.

Five hundred years after More's birth we are still perplexed by him. Even a secularist who is mocking of the doctrine of papal supremacy for which More died can admire the courage of his stance in the face of absolute royal power, bedecked with the laws of the realm, demanding positive, overt, verbal obedience. More engages one's sympathies. But when we remember the harsh punishments he meted out to those he considered "his heretics," we draw back, with the realization that religious zeal has been among the most barbarous of human vices, a position that More himself advanced in the *Utopia*.

There is a hidden violence in More and a controlled rage that is the more startling when it breaks through the calm surface in controversy and acts of authority. The source of his deep melancholy—the violence turned inward—has been looked for in the traditional places, in the early loss of a mother, in the dominance of a father who brought home three successive stepmothers, in the death of a beloved wife; but nothing quite accounts for the polarity of More's jocular and penitential nature. He who wanted to become a monk was forced by his father to be a lawyer, and in the end he rose to a spiritual order higher than the protected monastic servant of God. He became a martyr. But then the historic anomaly intrudes: He had written a little book that has appeared in over 150 editions and has sparked movements of men he would have considered diabolical in a literal sense. That More who was haunted by the fear of death and the fear of wishing death wrote a book about an order of worldly contentment in which death appears only casually as euthanasia may be one of the triumphs of the utopian imagination. *Utopia*, toppling the existing world order in fantasy, an innocent act of destruction, may have been for More, as it was for many who came after him, a saving act of sublimation.

Frank E. Manuel

Frank E. Manuel is University Professor at Brandeis University, and author of *Age of Reason* (Cornell Univ. Press).

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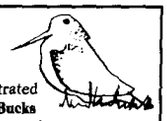

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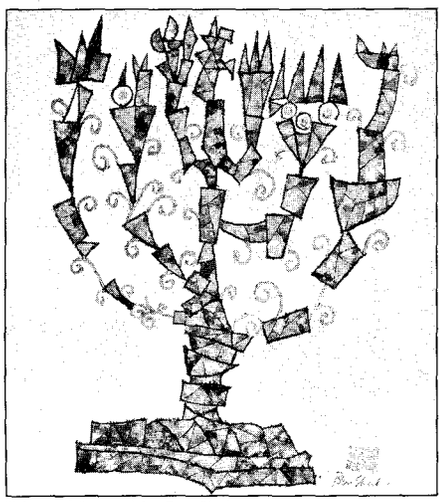
Middle East Diarist

Affinity

I mean no disrespect, but making one's way through the Arab world is a chore—physically, emotionally and culturally—and arriving in Israel is like taking a break, like coming home at the end of a trying day. Traveling in Israel is not like lolling in your American backyard, but neither is it the process of haggle and shove that it often is in the Arab world. In Tel Aviv, one does not constantly have to fend off street hawkers with pitches beginning, "Oh, America number one. Russia very bad. Welcome, welcome." A taxi fare in Israel is on the meter or can be negotiated reasonably quickly. In Saudi Arabia, one's entire ride is a bargaining session, and a disgruntled cab driver may appear at your hotel room, threatening in loud Arabic to call the police if his demands aren't met. Contemplating what a hassle with Saudi police might lead to, one pays up, but one doesn't think well of Saudi Arabia. A tourist at the Pyramids usually can't resist taking a camel ride, but then he finds the driver won't let him off the beast until an adequate "tip" is paid. In the Arab world, travelers, businessmen and other Westerners have the constant feeling of being taken, and often it seems that the official symbol of the Arab nation ought to be a hand, fingers held upward and together in anticipation of *baksheesh.*

In other respects, too, Israel seems like home. Things work. From Jerusalem, it does not take 12 hours to place a call to London. You do not arrive in Israel having to say small prayers that your hotel reservations will be honored. If you get sick or injured in Israel, you can expect perhaps better care than you'd get in Europe or America; in much of the Arab world, you might worry about your survival. Israelis complain about bureaucracy. But it has nothing to compare with government offices in Arab countries, which are often jammed with people seeming to have nothing to do but consume tea and occasionally scribble on a piece of paper. There is poverty in Israel, but one is not bombarded with evidence of it, as in Cairo, where dirty, barefoot children seem to be wandering around everywhere, untended, sometimes risking death amid the city's anarchic traffic. Some Arab cities are clean—Amman, for one—but most are covered either with dust from construction, as in Jeddah and Riyadh, or the smelly soot of decay, as in Cairo. Israel conveys, overall, an impression of modernity, scientific advancement, scholarship and technological progress, while most of the Arab world, even the



"Menorah" (1965) by Ben Shahn

rich part, is still underdeveloped. One tries to be enlightened, objective and tolerant about the differences, but it's impossible not to feel more comfortable in Israel.

This feeling of comfort extends to the social system as well. Certain religious communities in Israel expect married women to shave their heads and they decree that love-making should be performed only through a hole in a bedsheet, as a procreative duty and never for fun. Orthodox religionists require that men and women must not pray together even at the sacred Wailing Wall. But, generally, men and women are as equal in Israel as in the West. That may not be equal enough, but in the Arab world, even where women are not veiled and secluded, they are systematically subordinated, apparently because males fear that social and professional independence will lead women to sexual independence as well.

Even Israel's social and political wrongs are not entirely unfamiliar to Americans. The Israelis have second-class citizens, the oriental Jews, who might be likened to US blacks except that they now outnumber the ruling Ashkenazi and one day may rule the country themselves. There is also a parallel between Israel's dispossession of the Palestinian Arabs and the white man's treatment of the American Indian, except that the Israeli pacification program so far has been less brutal. One should not speak too soon, however, for Israel's use of Vietnam-era cluster bombs against Palestinian civilians in southern Lebanon suggests that Israel is fully capable of answering Palestinian resistance in the spirit of Wounded Knee.

And yet, even fair-minded Arabs will admit that nothing the Israelis have done to the Palestinians can match the savagery directed against them by fellow Arabs—by Jordan during the Black September massacres of 1970 and by Syrian and Lebanese Christian forces more recently. In Lebanon, what is more, the Palestinians and their allies the left-wing Moslems have demonstrated a capacity for butchery fully in keeping with that inflicted upon them. Americans can understand it when people of one nation or race slaughter those of another. But killing one's own brothers and sisters, the way the Arabs do it, is something with which we find it hard to identify.

We identify with Israel in part because it is a democracy, and we ought to empathize now with its democratic indecisiveness and hesitation about steps that will affect its survival and its identity. Americans can stand in awe of a leader like Sadat, who leaped far ahead of the Arab nation in offering peace to Israel. But we also have to sympathize with the Israelis if they cannot leap as quickly to respond. In a democracy, a whole people—or a majority at least—is responsible for the nation's destiny, and not a single man or a small elite. I do not think we are bound to support the Israelis if they reject a real chance for peace. I think we should encourage them to accept it by offering to guarantee their security if they do. But discerning and embracing real peace still will require Israelis to take a chance. With survival at stake, it would be a hard process even for the United States. For the Israelis, heirs to a tradition of oppression and woe that we do not share, it is much more difficult. In friendship, we need to bear with them. For peace, we need to tell the Arabs to do the same.

M.M.K.

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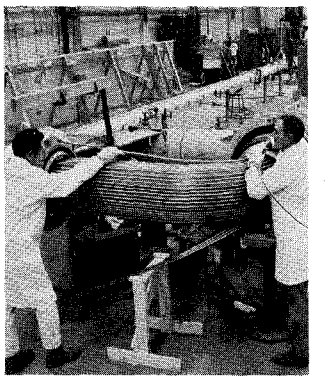

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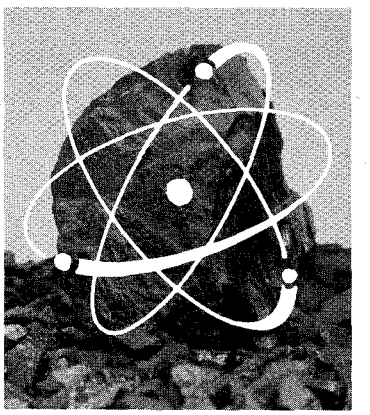

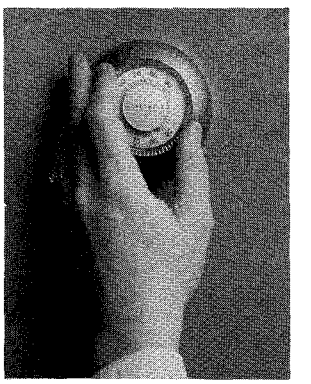

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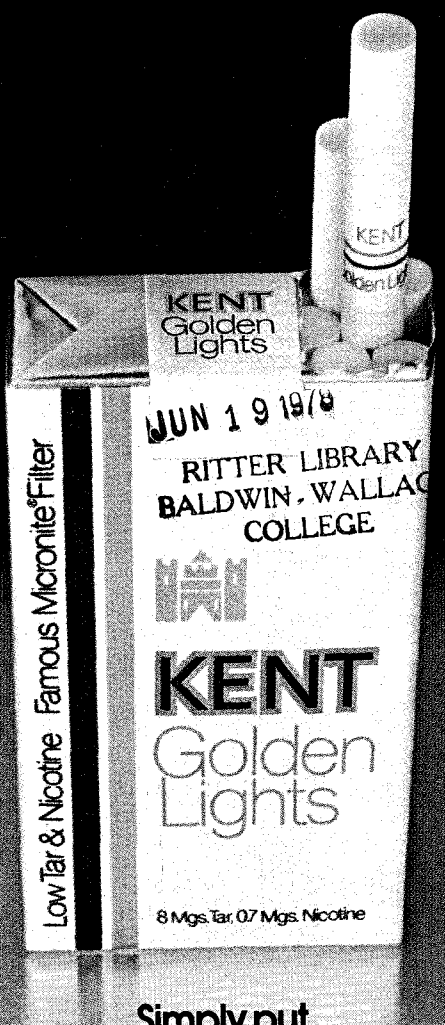

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